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## FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

## RESPECTING

# PALESTINE and TRANSJORDAN

## Part 2

**January to December, 1948**

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**SECRET**

## FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE RESPECTING PALESTINE AND TRANSJORDAN

PART 2.—JANUARY TO DECEMBER 1948

### CHAPTER I.—PALESTINE

J 373/68/16

No. 1

#### EAST VERSUS WEST IN ARAB AFFAIRS

##### Wafd's Condemnation of "Imperialistic" Policy in Palestine

*Mr. Chapman-Andrews to Mr. Attlee. (Received 19th January)*

(No. 20)

Sir,

Cairo, 12th January, 1948

With reference to His Majesty's Ambassador's despatch No. 952 of 27th November, I have the honour to transmit a copy of a letter<sup>(1)</sup> dated 25th December from Nahas Pasha to His Majesty's Ambassador, together with a copy of a French translation<sup>(1)</sup> enclosed therein of a manifesto of the Wafd, published on 20th December, 1947. I further enclose a copy of my reply<sup>(1)</sup> to Nahas Pasha.

2. The manifesto begins by condemning imperialist policy in general and expresses the disillusionment of the East with the Powers of the West, who, in spite of setting themselves up as the champions of democracy and raising the hopes of all, had, after winning the war, broken all their promises. They have proved that the West will always remain the same treacherous West, and the East the same frank and loyal East. The West has remained proud, despotic and imperialistic and continues to regard the Arab countries and their rights with scorn. If the statesmen of the West think that they will be allowed to accept with impunity the partition of Palestine, one of the two holy countries for Moslems and the home of the Prophets and of Revelation for all Arabs, they are greatly mistaken.

3. The United Nations Organisation has wickedly dismembered Palestine, violating its own charter, whilst certain spheres had

had the impertinence to resort to persuasion or intimidation in a disguised form. This decision aroused the indignation of the whole Moslem and Arab world which, with Egypt at its head, condemned it in view of the dreadful consequences which it must have on the peace of the world in general and of the East in particular. For there is no oriental, no Arab, who can accept such an injustice and who is not ready to give his blood to wipe it out. The Powers who have won the recent war are only thinking of realising their ambitions and enlarging their possessions, forgetting that not only in Palestine, but also in the other Arab countries and in the whole East, all men worthy of the name are prepared to make the greatest sacrifice to defend Palestine.

4. Addressing Egyptians, the manifesto points out that worthy sentiments are not enough to save Palestine, and that in spite of the resolution of all Arabs to give without limit arms, money and material, it is the Arab Governments who must now take practical decisions to direct the efforts of the individuals. If the Arab Governments are to be asked to act urgently to save Palestine, Egyptians must in the first place ask their Government to come out of its inertia, laziness, indecision and silence to take fearless action. Danger threatens not only Palestine but all Arab countries and particularly Egypt. With partition

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

accomplished, no oriental, no Arab could live in peace and freedom.

5. Addressing "the heroic sons of Palestine," the manifesto assures them that the Arab peoples with Egypt at their head will do their best to save them, and that the Wafd appeals to the Egyptian Government and other Arab Governments to take practical measures, of which the following are suggested as being the most effective:—

- (a) Governments should open at once their Treasuries to give Palestine the necessary money to fight the Zionists without waiting for public subscriptions which, however great, cannot be sufficient for the emergency.
- (b) They should at once come to the help of the victims and their families in Palestine.
- (c) They should supply Palestine with provisions, giving whatever she needs from the surplus of local production, amounting to hundreds of thousands of tons.
- (d) They should supply Palestine with technicians. Measures of this sort would be more useful to the Arabs in their fight against the Zionists than hundreds of demonstrations and thousands of speeches and declarations.

6. Addressing the "Sons of the East and the Arab countries," the manifesto asserts

that the massacres and destruction which have taken place in Palestine on account of the Zionists and Imperialists have taken place elsewhere in the new State of Pakistan. It is imperialistic policy which has brought massacre to India. The blood of Moslems who want to live in peace with their beliefs and enjoy political liberty is flowing. The commission for the partition of Bengal and the Punjab (whose president is an Englishman), has carried out this partition in such a manner as to excite intentionally the indignation at one and the same time of Moslems, Sikhs and Hindus. The attachment of Kashmir, which has a Moslem majority, to Hindustan has made the situation more critical, and this has been an imperialistic manoeuvre to sow hatred between the two States. Imperialism must bear the responsibility for the blood of hundreds and thousands of Moslems and for the displacement of many millions from their homes. The oldest of the democracies, which vaunts the standard of freedom, will always bear the weight of this blood. The manifesto ends with the final stirring appeal:—

"Let the East awake and unite—for the West plots its destruction. Let the Arabs co-ordinate their efforts because imperial policy is preparing to give them the *coup de grâce*."

I have, &c.

E. A. CHAPMAN-ANDREWS

No. 2

## BRITISH POLICY REGARDING PALESTINE

Extract from House of Commons Debates, 23rd March, 1948

*The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Ernest Bevin):* I should like to say that, on this matter, the Government have not changed their policy, and they cannot change their policy, because some other State makes a proposition—and that same State has made a number of propositions in regard to Palestine. The fact before the world is that the Assembly has made the decision. When this process has gone through the Security Council, they may be calling another Assembly to say what action should be taken. No one can say what is going to happen, but that does

not affect this Bill. This Bill covers our responsibilities in coming out. Neither this announcement nor the Assembly could do anything to affect our coming out.

Now hon. members opposite are asking what is the attitude of the Government going to be to the question of trusteeship? His Majesty's Government have stated all the way through that they will support anything which can be agreed between the Arabs and the Jews, but that they will not take part in enforcing anything, whether a trusteeship or anything else, on the one or the other. That has been their attitude

all the way through. I wish other people would realise what enforcement meant before they voted so easily.

His Majesty's Government take the view that it cannot anticipate these further discussions that will go on. We shall remain in a neutral position until we know what the proposals actually are. Would the right hon. gentleman opposite stand in this place and give an answer on what he would do in this or that situation when he has not seen the actual detailed proposition? I am not sure of the reactions of Arabs or Jews, or what they are going to do about it, and I do not know what the chances of a truce are. We have taken the line that we will do all we can to promote harmony between these two races.

One other point. We have made up our minds very strongly on a point on which I hope the committee will support us. We cannot be in the same position as the rest of the members of the United Nations until we are out of Palestine. While we have troops there, while we are there, involved as we have been, we do not get the same position as any other member of the United Nations. After 15th May, and we are out, and the transition is taking place in the administration, a very different situation can and may arise, but that is a matter that I cannot foresee at the moment. I do want to emphasise that we have to get into a position to enable us to be out of Palestine. That is the fundamental point of British policy. It has been asked whether we will hand over to chaos. That will not be the case: we have handed over to the United Nations. If the United Nations, in taking over, has produced chaos, how can it be said that Great Britain has handed over to chaos? It is not we who have done so. We have been willing to hand over to the Security Council or to anybody else.

*Mr. Mikardo (Reading):* The Government refused—

*Mr. Bevin:* We have never refused to hand it over—

*Mr. Mikardo:* It was refused here on Friday.

*Mr. Bevin:* We did nothing of the kind. We declined to have it in the Bill.

*Mr. S. Silverman* rose—

*Mr. Bevin:* Wait a moment. If hon. members cannot argue fairly, I do ask them to be truthful, for the sake of the world. We did not do that; we declined, as I understand it, to have it stated in the Bill.

*Mr. Warbey (Luton)* rose—

*Mr. Bevin:* Wait a moment. It was a very good thing that we did not put it in the Bill because we should have been tied. At the same time as we were moving, another country was moving in an entirely different situation. We are ready to hand over to whatever form of body the United Nations ultimately decide we shall hand over to. Let me make that perfectly clear.

*Mr. Warbey:* Is it not a fact that earlier this year the Palestine Commission asked His Majesty's Government that they should go to Palestine in accordance with the decision of the General Assembly? Is it not also a fact that His Majesty's Government told them that we could not go at that time?

*Mr. Bevin:* That is another issue altogether. That is a question of the date on which the Palestine Commission should arrive in Palestine, and who should provide for their security on arrival. That is another issue altogether, but we have made it perfectly clear that we have not opposed the United Nations decision ever since it was taken. Let whoever cares to misrepresent us do so, but that is the fact and I hope that it will go out quite clearly. If other people have created a muddle, why should His Majesty's Government be blamed? We were blamed because we did not do the right thing in Palestine when we were responsible; we were blamed when we were trying to get out; we are blamed for what is happening when we are going out. The quicker we are out, the better.

## CONVERSATION WITH THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR

## European Questions and Palestine

*Mr. Bevin to Lord Inverchapel (Washington)*(No. 484) *Foreign Office,*  
My Lord, 1st April, 1948

The American Ambassador called on me this morning on his return from the United States.

2. We had a general discussion on the European Recovery Programme, and he expressed appreciation of the work we had done in the C.E.E.C. He had just received a telegram from the State Department on the matter, which he had not yet had time to go through, but which did raise some points of importance. I therefore suggested that, to avoid delay, when he had studied it Sir E. Hall-Patch or Mr. Makins should go round and see him immediately and go through it, so that they could tell him at once if there were difficulties and see whether we could surmount them.

3. I then raised the question of the decision of the House of Representatives regarding Spain. He explained to me that the great desire of the Administration was to get a Bill through, and this Spanish issue might have led to a very long debate. They knew that it might be carried—it was difficult to resist in the House. But he told me I could forget it. When the two Houses went into conference the matter would be put straight, and in the end there would be no difficulty. I pointed out to him that quick action was necessary in order to retrieve the position both here and in France and Italy. It had caused consternation, and I did not think anyone realised how deep-seated the hatred of Franco really was. This was like a spark to a dying ember, setting it all afame again. It had done us a lot of harm in Europe, but if it was put right it would be forgotten just as quickly. He therefore assured me once again that I could forget it. It would be all right.

4. He then raised the question of Mr. Lovett's message about Palestine, and appealed very strongly that we should not abstain from voting, and so prevent the majority necessary for summoning a special Assembly, even though the Russians might veto the proposal. The United States Government were gravely concerned. They realised to the full the situation that had

I am, &c.  
ERNEST BEVIN.

been created and he had impressed upon everybody the determination of Britain to give up the Mandate and get out. That situation had to be faced, and he fully understood the British position, but that was not the end of things. I told him I could not advance a solution of the problem because I thought the crisis had been so intensified that this might be extremely difficult. In any case, Britain must get out. I told him that I was in touch with the Prime Minister, who was at Chequers, and I hoped to get an immediate decision on the instructions to be sent to Sir A. Cadogan this morning.

5. Mr. Douglas then raised the question of the United States Government's desire to notify their withdrawal from their obligations incurred towards Czechoslovakia under the Geneva Convention on Tariffs and Trade. Mr. Douglas explained that the Czechs could themselves continue to obtain every advantage from the agreement and then afterwards make it a dead letter so far as they were concerned whenever this suited them. Another factor influencing the United States Government was that Togliatti had been putting it about in Italy that, no matter how the Italian electorate voted, Italy could still rely upon economic assistance from the West in some form or other. The United States Government were determined to put an end to dangerous illusions of this kind, and thought that a good way to do so would be by taking the action they had suggested in regard to Czechoslovakia. I said that the proposal raised serious difficulties for us and also for the French, but that I would look into the matter again in the light of his explanation.

6. I then told the American Ambassador that there were other matters affecting Germany—the date for the resumption of the tripartite talks, &c.—and another appointment must be fixed in which we could go through them. Mr. Douglas looked very tired and worn, and there is no doubt that he is suffering under very great strain.

## CONVERSATION WITH THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR

## Administration of Palestine

*Mr. Bevin to Lord Inverchapel (Washington)*(No. 553) *Foreign Office,*  
My Lord, 15th April, 1948

The United States Ambassador called on me to-day and, among other things, discussed the note on Palestine which he had left with me on 13th April.

2. I informed him that my colleagues had not come to any decision on the matter. I said I would await the discussion in the Assembly, but I did remind him that if this note was publicised it would arouse such hostility here that it would endanger relations between the United States and ourselves. It was a tremendous present to the Communists. The whole note forgot that it was our sergeants who had been hanged and our soldiers who were being killed. The whole activity of the Jewish

Agency for months had been against us and now, as a result of the conflict, we had the Arabs as well to contend with. If any statesman in this country suggested that this Government should take further responsibility in Palestine, as the United States note indicated, I did not believe he would survive for a moment.

3. I then suggested to Mr. Douglas, on a personal basis, that the United States might consider whether they should let this whole thing evolve and see what happened in the discussion in the Assembly and not expect an official reply to the note, which I did not think was conducive to good feeling.

I am, &c.  
ERNEST BEVIN.

## CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR

## Administration of Palestine

*Mr. Bevin to Lord Inverchapel (Washington)*(No. 601) *Foreign Office,*  
My Lord, 23rd April, 1948.

The United States Ambassador, who had called again yesterday evening as recorded in my telegram No. 1658 to New York to discuss again the question of Palestine, asked to see me this evening on the same subject. In his original message asking for an interview Mr. Douglas had said that he would like to see me first and then go over with me to see the Prime Minister. When he called, however, he had nothing very new to say, except to express his fears that, if His Majesty's Government could not go beyond the line I had taken with him

yesterday, the effect upon Anglo-American relations might be most unfortunate. He volunteered, however, that in view of suggestions in the British press this morning that the United States Government were bringing strong pressure to bear in London, it might be preferable for him not to ask to see the Prime Minister this evening. I agreed with him, but told him that if he really wanted to see the Prime Minister I would make arrangements for a meeting to take place discreetly next week.

I am, &c.  
ERNEST BEVIN.

**CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE  
UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR**

**Situation in Palestine: Attitude of Neighbouring States**

*Mr. Bevin to Lord Inverchapel (Washington)*

(No. 633) *Foreign Office,*  
My Lord, 29th April, 1948

I asked the United States Ambassador to call on me to-day with reference to the discussion which we had had with the Prime Minister the previous afternoon.

2. At that meeting I undertook to take such steps as I could to persuade the Arab Governments, and particularly King Abdullah, not to invade Palestine providing the Jews ceased their provocation and their attacks on the Arabs. I asked him whether he had any information from his Government as to what was happening or what steps had been taken, not merely to bring pressure to bear, but to cause the Jews to desist from their tactics. We had information that Jaffa, which was an Arab city, was being attacked by the Jews and the most violent actions were being carried out with the loss of a good many lives and destruction of much property. I indicated to him that I thought it was rather unfair for this pressure to be put on King Abdullah when apparently little was being done with reference to the Jews. I then handed him a copy of the Truce Commission's document which had been handed to King Abdullah to-day, which reads as follows:

*Iraq* was reticent, but there was in fact a great disturbance of public opinion there. The Iraqi Government would do their best to respond, but it all depended upon whether the Jews ceased their activity. If the Arabs were left in the state they were in to-day, they would be placed in very great difficulty. The Iraqi Government had indicated that they must take their place with other Arab States in their firm stand and that effective urgent steps would soon be taken in concert with the other Arab States. In the meantime the Government had appealed to the people to keep cool, and for peace and quiet.

*Transjordan*.—So far as King Abdullah was concerned, representations were made to him and the Prime Minister by our representative. The King's reply was that the Jews were on the offensive everywhere and that offensives usually brought counter-offensives. He had gone to considerable trouble in preventing action in Palestine. Arab Legion positions had been shelled from Palestine territory and therefore the Transjordan troops had fired on the Jews in return. The general indication of his attitude was that, if there is a chance of preventing the Jews carrying on their attack, there will be no difficulty with him.

*Syria*.—Our representative in Damascus had appealed to the Government to urge calm and restraint. The President had already done this last week. It was pointed out to us that the United Nations had not yet obtained agreement regarding Jerusalem and the Holy Places, and that this fact should be borne in mind by the Syrian Government so that nothing might happen

which would have repercussions in those Places. The Syrian Government reminded our representative of the reverence in which the Holy Places were held by Islam, but said that they were already being defiled by the Jews. He took the point about restraint and said he would inform his colleagues in the Cabinet.

*Egypt*.—In Cairo our representative spoke to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Minister said he would do all he possibly could in the sense desired. He thought the Arabs would not initiate any attack on Jerusalem, which was as dear to them as to anyone else, and he expressed the strong hope that British forces would do everything they could to prevent attacks by Jews. On the question of attack by Egypt, this would depend on the actions of the Jews.

*Arab League*.—Azzam Pasha had spoken to us about the appeals for help from the Arabs, who were terrorised by the Jews and particularly by Irgun, and mentioned particularly the attack on Jaffa which was in progress at that moment. Azzam Pasha renewed his request that units of the Arab Legion might be permitted to protect their people before 15th May. We had urged calm.

4. I then referred to the report you had sent me in your telegram No. 2027 of your conversation with Mr. Lovett, and said that I feared that the United States Administration did not realise what the Jews were doing in Palestine and how this would affect the whole position in the Middle East.

5. In the course of the discussion I called the United States Ambassador's attention to the appreciation of the situation provided, at our request, by the High Commissioner in his telegram No. 1119. In this appreciation occurs the following statement, which we regarded as extremely sinister and which should be taken into account when dealing with the problem of Palestine:—

"The Jewish Agency, notwithstanding its present confidence and optimism, is

still afraid that the United States may attempt to impose trusteeship. These fears have finally convinced the Agency that their only course now is to establish a Jewish State and launch an all-out offensive against the Arabs to demonstrate Jewish military strength. The internal machinery of Jewish State is now almost completely organised and includes staff for press censorship and all equipment of a totalitarian régime, including a Custodian of Enemy Property to handle Arab lands. It is said that their draft defence regulations are more drastic than anything we ever had. In Yishuv itself persecution of Christian Jews and others who offend against national discipline has shown a marked increase, and in some cases has reached mediaeval standards. Detention and interrogation are common features of life in Yishuv to-day. The national institutions have taken first step towards implementation of the Haganah-Irgun agreement which provides not for (? uniting) but for co-operation between the two forces."

6. I then explained to the Ambassador that, while we had done all I had promised at our interview last night, we felt very strongly that the same action was not being taken regarding the Jews, and that the only Government which could do so with certainty and real effect was the United States Government. It was not proper that they should be putting pressure upon us to take action and leave it to us alone to try to get reason from the Arabs, who were being provoked, while apparently nothing at all was being done in connexion with the Jews. After all, the present Jewish action was the direct outcome of United States policy, and therefore we felt it was they, and they alone, who could really remedy the situation.

I am, &c.  
ERNEST BEVIN.

No. 7

**RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL**

*From Mr. Bevin to all His Majesty's Representatives*

(No. 195. Intel.)  
(Telegraphic)

We are not at present contemplating recognising the Jewish State.

*Foreign Office,  
16th May, 1948*

E 7247/1078/31

No. 8

## PALESTINE: UNITED STATES POLICY

Sir J. Balfour to Mr. Bevin (Received 1st June)

(No. 848. Secret) Washington,  
Sir,

24th May, 1948.

The termination of the British Mandate in Palestine is a suitable moment at which to review the development of United States policy towards Palestine in recent months. Such a review would normally have been incorporated in a further report on Jewish affairs in the United States, the last of which was sent to you under cover of Lord Inverchapel's despatch No. 1466 of 16th June, 1947. But the main outline of Jewish affairs has been so simple during the last year that no such lengthy report seems called for.

2. Jewish attention in this country has been concentrated upon proceedings in the United Nations, and the efforts of all Zionists, against whom non-Zionists could make no headway, have been directed towards the organisation of a campaign to force the United States Administration to give heed to their wishes. After a period of considerable anxiety, American Zionists were ultimately successful in this campaign. It is true that the United States Administration made a belated attempt to have the Palestine problem considered in the wider setting of American interests in the Middle East. But this attempt foundered on the unwillingness of members of the United Nations to follow the gyrations of United States policy, in the absence of any clear indication that the United States Government would itself play a major part in the implementation of its new proposals. In the resulting vacuum, the Jews were able to achieve the *de facto* partition of Palestine and to represent that they were doing no more than give effect to the recommendations made by the United Nations on 29th November, 1947.

3. It is clear that the President himself has always supported partition. Although there is no reason to doubt his personal sincerity, it is also true that he has been under very great pressure from his campaign managers, who have all along been terrified of incurring the ill-will of the very powerful Zionist lobby and of its loyal *blocs* of voters in key States. Even when the United States Government was officially maintaining that partition could not be implemented and that some other interim solution must therefore be sought,

Mr. Truman made it evident that he continued to hope for partition as the ultimate solution. This was also the hope of most Americans, who tend to see the partisans of a Jewish State as following in the footsteps of the United States founding fathers and the Arabs as the modern equivalent of George III.

4. Against a formidable array of politicians, supporters of the United Nations, professional Zionists, and the disinterested admirers of the Jewish efforts to acquire a homeland, were ranged a number of officials in the State Department who were concerned with the Middle East. But their opposition would have been unavailing without the powerful aid of the Secretary of Defence, Mr. Forrestal, and of the armed services. The strength of Arab opposition provoked alarm in these last-named quarters, where there was naturally a greater concern with the wider strategic and economic consequences of the Administration's pro-Zionist policy than amongst those elements primarily influenced by emotional or domestic considerations. In proportion, moreover, as it began to appear to Congress and the public at large that partition might involve a call for the shedding of American blood, there was for the first time a chance for the Middle East experts to compete successfully with the politicians for the casting vote of the President.

5. The fact that the United States Government was wavering in its support for partition was first brought to public notice by James Reston in an article in the *New York Times* towards the end of January. He reported that the Administration was attempting to formulate a bi-partisan policy towards Palestine. His article clearly implied that the bi-partisan policy would not be that hitherto followed by the Administration.

6. Mr. Forrestal was soon mentioned as the prime mover in the new policy. Thereupon Zionist forces at once redoubled the fire previously opened against the embargo which the United States Government had placed early in December on the export of arms to the Middle East, in conformity with the United Nations appeal to all countries not to exacerbate the situation in Palestine.

Pro-Zionists severely criticised the Administration's explanation that their earlier support of partition had been based upon the belief, subsequently shown to be over-optimistic, that this solution could be brought into effect without undue violence, and that other countries were not prepared to make the necessary forces available for its implementation. In this criticism, pro-Zionists were joined by strong supporters of the United Nations, who asserted that the prestige of that Organisation would be seriously weakened by the vacillations of the United States Government. All these critics maintained that the Arabs could have been brought to heel had the United States Government continued to show the same determination which it had displayed, but not openly admitted, in forcing the United Nations to adopt the recommendations in favour of partition.

7. The effect of this shift in United States policy was to remit responsibility for Palestine once again to the State Department, who, as an alternative to partition, elaborated a plan for a temporary trusteeship over Palestine without prejudice to the final solution. The State Department realised that, owing to the irritation felt by many members of the United Nations at the changes in United States policy, it would be very difficult to obtain a majority in the Special Assembly for their new proposals. They were therefore most anxious to obtain support for them from His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. Failing this support, the State Department feared that there would be no chance at all of their acceptance. The main reasons for their appeal to His Majesty's Government to support the trusteeship proposals were set forth to you by Mr. Douglas in a memorandum of 13th April (your telegram No. 1527 of 14th April to the United Kingdom Delegation in New York).

8. In his telegram No. 1347 of 20th March, His Majesty's Ambassador had expressed the view that, because of its very domestic weakness, the Administration had probably attained a new independence of judgment, which had enabled the President to listen to his more experienced advisers and to ignore the domestic pressure to which he had previously yielded. The conclusion expressed at that time was not, I think, vitiated by the United States Government's decision some weeks later to grant immediate recognition to the provisional Jewish Government as the *de facto* authority in Palestine. In the interval the follow-

ing new considerations had arisen: As the end of the mandate approached it became clear to the Administration that its proposals, which His Majesty's Government deemed to be impracticable, were not destined to receive enough support in the United Nations and that the State Department's efforts in favour of a temporary trusteeship were consequently about to fail. Jewish successes against the Arabs, which seemed to remove the risk that partition would require to be backed by United States troops, also operated to convince the Administration that, whatever the importance of other considerations, the proclamation of the new State could not be prevented, and that nothing could therefore be lost by taking a step which would commend itself to an important segment of American voters. It had moreover become evident that Congress would bend before the renewed Zionist pressure even if the President were to try to resist it.

9. In these circumstances, and in the light of the important Soviet factor mentioned below, the view prevailed when the President and his advisers discussed the matter on the final day of the British mandate that, in so far as the situation in Palestine itself was concerned, the recognition of the one authority which appeared likely to establish itself was preferable to leaving a complete vacuum. The search for an alternative solution was, in fact, pursued by the United States Government until the last moment—even to the extent of abandoning its own proposals for a trusteeship in favour of a British suggestion for a Commissioner who would hold the fort for the time being on the basis of a political standstill and a truce. The fact of course remains that the whole international approach to the Palestine problem was seriously affected by the Administration's sudden decision, which took even its own delegates at Lake Success completely by surprise.

10. One other important aspect of the problem during recent months deserves special mention—namely, the attitude of the United States towards Soviet policy in relation to Palestine. After the first burst of enthusiasm about Soviet-American agreement on partition last year, suspicion of Soviet motives soon reasserted itself. It was once again assumed that in Palestine, no less than in other parts of the world, the objective of Soviet policy was to embarrass the United States Government. This consideration was no doubt present in

the minds of those who opposed any enforcement of partition, and it must have influenced the President when he accepted their advice. But, in proportion as it became evident that the United Nations would take no effective action and that the Jews could not be prevented from proclaiming their State and would not require armed support from the United States or the United Nations in order to establish their State *de facto*, the problem came to present itself as a race in which the Soviet Union must be forestalled. It was apprehended that the Soviet Government would score a propaganda *coup* if it were the first to recognise the new provisional Government and would thereby render those in power at Tel Aviv less amenable to Western influence.

11. Although Mr. Truman's decision to accord *de facto* recognition to the provisional Government has been widely acclaimed in the United States, there is nevertheless an uncomfortable feeling in many quarters that the United States Government has cut a somewhat sorry figure and that the method, if not the substance, of its action is open to serious criticism. But there is no disposition to question the right of the Jews to re-establish their ancient State, or to grant any sympathetic hearing to the Arabs.

12. Although the campaign of the American Zionists has now reached a successful conclusion, they must henceforth exercise circumspection. It is clear in the first place, both from private observation and from the warnings of more moderate Jews, that anti-Semitism in the United States is strong and on the increase. Secondly, it is plain that opposition to the dispatch of United States troops to fight Jewish battles is equally strong. Were the situation in Palestine to develop to a point in which the United States Government felt itself constrained to take action manifestly calculated to damage its wider interests, the large section of public opinion which has so far remained indifferent might therefore well become aroused and the effect on the Jewish community in this country would be serious. It is an open question whether, when the first flush of enthusiasm has died down, American Jewry will sustain the efforts which are now being made to support the Jews in Palestine. It can be assumed that American Jewry will lose much of its appeal as a determining factor in United States foreign policy in the interval between the Presidential elec-

tion next November and the Congressional elections in 1950.

13. This is a melancholy story of indecision and weakness. It throws a vivid light on the inefficiency of the American governmental machine which, when Congress is of a different party from the President and the latter lacks the power of leadership, results in a tug-of-war between the international and domestic interests of the United States. It is also symptomatic of a political immaturity, not yet entirely outgrown, which from time to time permits considerations of domestic policy to prevail over the demands presented by the realities of the international situation in an unstable world. It is this factor which so greatly alarms other nations who are perforce dependent upon the United States Government, with its great potential military strength and economic resources, to rescue them from the difficulties and dangers with which they are beset.

14. The immediate future unhappily offers no brighter a picture than the past. The residual problems presented by the Palestine question are no less difficult and menacing than are those of recent months. The probable imminent removal of the American arms embargo; action in the United Nations against the Arab States; and *de jure* recognition of the State of Israel, together with the possibility of its acceptance as a member of the United Nations, are all questions which carry within them the seeds of serious Anglo-American discord. All of them may at any moment become accomplished facts. The State Department for its part has for some time feared that a position would be reached in which, with the approval of the Administration, Americans would be supplying the Jews with arms, whilst His Majesty's Government would be giving military aid to some of the Arab States. Notwithstanding the ultimate community of interests between the United States and the United Kingdom, there can be no doubt that these problems place a considerable strain upon Anglo-American relations. This will be particularly true during the coming months when the United States will be immersed in a heated election campaign.

15. Behind the question of Palestine lies the wider problem of Anglo-American co-operation in the Middle East. The successful defence and development of that area is dependent upon concerted action by both countries and on the existence of a ground favourable to the reception of the

measures which both deem necessary. His Majesty's Government have always recognised, and it has long been acknowledged by those United States diplomatic and military authorities who understand the issues at stake, that Palestine was liable to nullify all efforts in the desired direction. These fears are abundantly justified by our own recent difficulties in the Middle East, and by Arab hostility to the United States Government.

16. In the absence of a close knowledge of all the factors involved, it is difficult to offer constructive suggestions on the measures which might be taken to minimise these causes of Anglo-American friction. They are, of course, largely the result of past United States policy. But, now that His Majesty's Government no longer have a direct responsibility for Palestine, and are to that extent less directly vulnerable to American vagaries, it would appear to be the part of wisdom to refrain from undue recrimination on this score. Moreover, the very fact that, for a time at any rate, saner counsels were able to prevail at Washington indicates that forces of enlightenment are at work in this country which may gain further momentum if Soviet policy continues on its present course.

17. It would therefore seem to follow that we should continue to keep the United States Government closely informed of developments in the Middle East and, on the basis of our own long and riper experience, patiently explain to them the vital issues at stake. In other words, we should strive at all times to preserve and foster the Administration's awareness of the importance to the United States of the Middle East as a whole and of the essential community of both our interests in that part of the world. Whatever the shortcomings of American policy towards Palestine, we should none the less set ourselves to narrow the divergencies which will inevitably arise between us. Whilst we must not hesitate to disagree when we honestly feel that any given United States

move is mistaken, we should at the same time never fail to make it crystal clear that we are ready to co-operate to the best of our ability in the common interests of our two countries.

18. All this postulates the exercise of great forbearance. But, in so far as our difficulties arise from American lack of experience, we can at least take heart from the fact that, although the process may seem slow in the settling of immediate problems, this defect is being remedied at a pace which is astonishingly rapid when one recalls the atmosphere in this country only a few years ago. Furthermore we should, perhaps, temper our natural irritation at the irresponsible and vacillating attitude of many highly placed Americans with some recognition of the fact that, after a generation during which they could afford the luxury of backseat driving, these people have suddenly found themselves called upon to play a leading part in dealing with a problem so complex that even we ourselves, with our lengthy Middle Eastern experience, have been forced to admit our inability to arrive at its solution.

19. As matters stand, our main task must be to encourage the process of American education by all means open to us. With the thought in mind that, once the elections are over, circumstances will be more propitious for the acceptance of saner counsels, we should in the meantime assert our interests where we must in a manner calculated to appeal to those elements in the United States Government who are aware of the wider international picture.

20. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the United Kingdom Representative with the United Nations, to His Majesty's Representatives at Cairo, Amman, Damascus, Beirut, Bagdad, Jeddah and Moscow, and to the British Middle East Office at Cairo.

I have, &c.

JOHN BALFOUR,  
*Chargé d'Affaires.*

No. 9

#### PALESTINE: TRUCE PROPOSALS

*Extract from House of Common Debates, 2nd June, 1948*

*The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Ernest Bevin):* I desire to thank the House for not pressing me to

make a statement on Palestine earlier, and I am not in a position to-day to say very much.

The House will be aware that His Majesty's Government have been concentrating all their efforts on an endeavour to bring about a cease-fire and to create conditions in which the two parties would be brought together with a view to achieving a final solution of this problem. To that end we have submitted a series of resolutions to the Security Council, and the final one as amended was agreed on Saturday and has been put before the two parties. Their replies will now be considered by the Security Council.

I am glad that the reports indicate that both parties have accepted the four weeks' cease-fire and have agreed that discussions should proceed with the mediator. There are indications that there are qualifications in the acceptance, but I am not yet in possession of the full qualifications of both sides. No doubt these will come before the Security Council to-day. In any case, I am sure I voice the feeling of the House when I say that we hope there are no detailed conditions which will prevent the cease-fire operating and the discussions proceeding. We have kept in the closest possible touch with the other Commonwealth Governments on all these matters. We are convinced that it would be premature to express any further views or

opinions about the form which the eventual settlement may take.

It is the task of the mediator to make contact with both sides in order to seek a peaceful adjustment of the whole situation. We shall give him our utmost assistance in this task. The House will join me in wishing him every success in his most arduous and difficult rôle, but we are convinced that there is among both Arabs and Jews a large majority of moderate and peaceful men and women who would welcome nothing more than the prospect of a lasting and just peace. We are of the opinion that if this can be brought about and the two peoples can live together in harmony, this will play a great part in the economic development and progress which is so much needed throughout the whole Middle East.

*Mr. Gallacher:* Would it not help very greatly in getting an effective settlement if the Foreign Secretary made it clear that he accepts the Resolution of U.N.O. for two States, a Jewish State and an Arab State, in Palestine?

*Mr. Speaker:* I should have thought that provocative questions would not help the truce.

E 7451/103/65

No. 10

### CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND AMIR FAISAL

(1) Situation in Palestine. (2) Need for Co-operation between Arab States

*Mr. Bevin to Mr. Trott (Jedda)*

(No. 79) *Foreign Office, 2nd June, 1948.*

The Amir Faisal, who arrived in London yesterday as the guest of His Majesty's Government, called on me to-day.

2. After the usual formalities I turned to the subject of Palestine. I stressed that my main aim had been to have the fighting stopped. I emphasised that in my efforts to ensure that injustice was not done to the Arabs I had been in a very difficult situation with regard to the Americans and that I had been under very great pressure on many sides. I hoped that with good will a settlement could now be made. The Amir Faisal expressed his appreciation of my efforts, expressed the hope that support as well as sympathy would be forthcoming

from His Majesty's Government and deplored the activities of President Truman.

3. I then said that looking at the Middle East as a whole I was struck by its need for unity. Without co-operation between the Middle East States they were wide open to Soviet attack just as Western Europe had been until the practical expression which we had lately given to the idea of Western union had introduced the cohesion which had been lacking before. For this reason I was anxious to see improved co-operation between the Arab States and in particular I felt that good relations between King Ibn Saud and between King Abdullah of Transjordan could make a great contribution. I knew that it was

thought that I controlled all King Abdullah's activities. This was not so. He was entirely independent and when I made representations to him it was on the same footing and in the same terms as to other Arab monarchs and other Arab Governments. Further, I wished to stress that it was a mistake to suggest that I favoured the Hashemites at the expense of other Arab States. I wanted to make it quite clear that I did not favour one Arab State more than another. But for the reasons I had given and with no ulterior motive I was most concerned to see improved relations and a good understanding between King Ibn Saud and King Abdullah. If it could be reached, it would

be a great contribution towards improved general understanding. I concluded by pointing out that apart from the other considerations I had put forward it was only by working together that the Arab States could develop the great economic resources of the Middle East.

4. In reply the Amir Faisal confined himself to generalities on the importance of co-operation and good will all round.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Amman, Bagdad, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus and Washington and to British Middle East Office.

I am, &c.

ERNEST BEVIN.

E 7588/4/31

No. 11

### CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR

British Policy regarding Palestine

*Mr. Bevin to Sir O. Franks (Washington)*

(No. 792) *Sir,*

*Foreign Office, 4th June, 1948.*

During conversation with the United States Ambassador to-day the question of Palestine was discussed. A number of telegrams which had been received from the mediator were considered, which in the main dealt with the question of military and naval observers. I indicated that our attitude was that the military observers should be limited to the countries represented on the Truce Commission, but I had

learned that Count Bernadotte had also communicated with the Swedish Government, who had agreed to assist.

2. Mr. Douglas felt that His Majesty's Government's attitude was the right one. We agreed that the telegrams should be closely examined by officials at the Foreign Office and at the United States Embassy, and that on the basis of that examination we should communicate with the mediator.

I am, &c.

ERNEST BEVIN.

No. 12

### POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF ISRAEL

*Sir H. Dow to Mr. Bevin. (Received 9th June)*

(No. 2. Saving) *Jerusalem, 6th June, 1948.*

(Telegraphic) *My telegram No. 148.*

As stated in my telegram under reference I have very little information which would indicate whether or not the State of Israel is developing along totalitarian lines. My contacts with the Jews have so far been entirely telephonic and only one copy of the *Palestine Post* and copies of two Hebrew newspapers, both published in

Jerusalem, have reached the consulate since 14th May. Moreover, the heart of the Jewish State is in Tel Aviv and even the Jewish Agency, dependent in the main on wireless communications, is not fully *au fait* with what is happening there.

2. The information which I have been able to gather on the heads mentioned in your telegram No. 83 [28th May] is:

(a) *Constitution.*—There have been preliminary discussions, but they are unlikely

to be brought to a head before the end of the military struggle. It is, I am informed by a leading Jew, the intention to convene an elected Constituent Assembly when conditions permit. One such condition mentioned in conversation by a member of the agency staff was the participation of the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel. Thought is being given to the problem of producing a constitution which will reconcile modern demands with Jewish law, a task which has not been undertaken since the days of Maimonides (and then only academically). A group of scholars from the Harry Fischel Institute is working on this question under the younger son of Chief Rabbi Herzog. They do not expect to complete their work for some years. In the meantime some interim arrangement has been agreed to by the Chief Rabbis to reconcile secular and ecclesiastical claims. This latter aspect is of some importance in a country where, as you are aware, the whole law of personal status, including inheritance, has been religious law and has been administered by religious courts.

(b) *Police Organisation*.—So far as I am aware this is based largely on the Jewish members of the former Palestine Police. Thus the effective head of the Jerusalem Police is Mr. S. Soffer, B.E.M., a former Superintendent at C.I.D. headquarters. The Minister for Police is Mr. B. Shitreet, who started his career in the police in 1920 and was a magistrate on the termination of the mandate. The process of transforming the Palestine Police into a Jewish (and an Arab) force has been materially assisted by the steps taken to this very end by the Palestine Government. There is evidence that the Jews have kept on much of the former allegedly "police state" organisation of the mandatory authorities, such as the top secret telephone monitoring staff and equipment which are reported to have been taken over as a going concern.

(c) *Law*.—Emergency Regulations have been promulgated. My only information about them is that they deal with such matters as the requisitioning of property, behaviour during air raids and the penalties to be imposed on shopkeepers selling rationed commodities who fail to comply with rules as to hours of opening (in Jerusalem at present 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. with no break in the middle of the day). It is not improbable that the Defence (Emergency) Regulations of the Government of Palestine provided a valuable source book. The only laws which have been promulgated

are, I am told, one abolishing the provisions of the White Paper of 1939 and one dealing with the land, sea and air forces of the State of Israel. The latter provides that there shall be no armed forces outside those of the State, *i.e.*, Stern and Irgun Zvai Leumi are to be merged in the Haganah (see paragraph 5 below). There are indications that the Jews accept the view that the laws of the Mandatory Government remain until repealed. I have no information on the appointment of judges.

(d) *Censorship*.—Press censorship in Jerusalem is being carried out by a former member of the Palestine Government Censorship. His relations with British correspondents appear to be as good as his office permits. I do not know what press regulations have been made.

(e) *Organisation*.—It is clear that in Jerusalem the civil authorities have had to give way almost entirely to military control. Both Mr. Daniel Auster, O.B.E., Mayor of Jewish Jerusalem, and Mr. Ben Zevie, M.B.E., chairman of the Vaad Leumi, feel slighted by the off-hand way in which they are being treated. I suspect that the Jewish Agency finds itself at times in a similar position. I doubt if there has been time to define the relations between the Provisional Government, the Vaad Leumi (the General Council of the Elected Assembly of the Jewish Community elected under the Jewish Community Rules, 1928, which were themselves made under the Religious Communities (Organisation) Ordinance, 1926) and the Jewish Agency. The fact that the list of members of the first as originally published contained no mention of Ministers of Health and Education suggests that the Vaad Leumi may be continuing many of its functions. A list of the Provisional Government, together with details of the matters for which they are responsible according to information released on 2nd June, is as follows:—

#### *Provisional Government of the State of Israel*

Prime Minister and Minister of Defence : Mr. David Ben-Gurion.

Foreign Affairs : Mr. Moshe Shertok.  
Treasurer : Mr. Eliezer Kaplan.

Interior (including broadcasting, press, district administration, local government, cinemas, information, labour relations, industrial courts and naturalisation) : Mr. Itzhak Gruenbaum.

Trade and Industry (including supply and war-time controls) : Mr. Fritz Bernstein.

Communications : Mr. David Remez.  
War and Planning (including prisoners of war and Town Planning) : Mr. Mordechai Bentov.

Justice (including land registration, land settlement and administrator-general) : Mr. Felix Rosenblueth.

Police and Minorities : Mr. Behor Shitreet.

Agriculture (including immigration) : Mr. Aharon Zisling.

Religion (including religious courts, personal status, relations with religious groups and war casualties) : Rabbi Yehudah Leib Fishman.

Social Welfare (including social services bureau, charitable organisations, underprivileged children and young delinquents) : Rabbi I. M. Lewin.

(f) *Implements of expression*.—I am unable to say how much freedom the Hebrew press is allowed. The three broadcasting stations heard in Jerusalem are efficient, but clearly under close control. The first, the Voice of Israel, is the organ of the Provisional Government in Tel Aviv; the second, the Voice of Jerusalem (which is run by the staff and on the wavelength of the Hebrew section of the former Palestine Broadcasting Service under the direction of Mr. K. Salomon, himself of the P.B.S.) appears to be that of the Jewish Agency, while the existence of the third, the Haganah Station, broadcasting from the Jerusalem area, may be a further indication of the lack of co-operation between the civil and military authorities. The I.Z.L. and Stern Group transmitters have apparently ceased to function.

(g) *Minorities*.—Their welfare is at present the concern of Mr. Shitreet, who has been mentioned above. He is a Palestine-born Jew and knows Arabic well. I have no doubt that the frequently-expressed intention of treating the Arab minority in the State of Israel well is sincere, but the existence of a state of war between Arabs and Jews doubtless makes it difficult to give it practical effect at present. A custodian of Arab property was appointed before the termination of the mandate to safeguard Arab property in areas occupied by Jewish forces. It appears, however, that he has been unable to prevent a good deal of looting. An agency spokesman has said that the Jewish authorities are prepared to consider giving compensation in suitable

cases. The worst off minority is in all probability the Jews who have abandoned the faith of their fathers and embraced Christianity (the abandonment of Judaism without the acquisition of Christianity is no offence). Some assert that the establishment of the Jewish State is the only solution for this problem since when nationality is the hallmark of the Palestine Jew even a Hebrew-Christian will be able to be a good Jew. This ideal state of affairs will, however, be long in coming and the Palestine Jew will doubtless continue to be denied complete freedom of religion.

3. It appears to me unlikely that the Jews under their present leaders will voluntarily adopt totalitarian principles. The strongest force in the Yishuv is undoubtedly a socialism which has put its democratic principles into what some would regard excessive practice in the collective settlements. The settlers are in many ways the back-bone of the Yishuv and it is hard to imagine them, nurtured on various varieties of socialism, surrendering their freedom. Further factors which militate against totalitarianism are the not unimportant liberal element, exemplified in the Aliyah Hadashah. There are also the religious Jews, who, while not strong enough to enforce the ecclesiastical totalitarianism dear to their hearts, would certainly offer bitter resistance to a secular one. All these schools of thought, social, liberal and religious, concerned elements who are much concerned with maintaining good relations with their Arab neighbours.

4. The present leadership does not harbour any likely dictators except the demagogic Ben-Gurion. The good sense of the Jews is, however, sufficient to take some of the wind out of his sails with the nickname "the little dictator of Rehavia."

5. In evaluating present tendencies among the Jews it must be recalled that, in their own eyes at least, they are a people at war and willingly accept the restrictions on personal freedom which this entails. This, combined with nationalism inherent in political zionism, may well produce the appearance of totalitarianism and the reality of a society with considerably less freedom than a Western democracy. But the diversity of political outlooks (and to those enumerated in paragraph 3 above must be added Communists and the parties of the centre and the extreme right) makes it difficult to see how a totalitarian one-man party State could emerge without recourse to the forcible suppression of a majority of

the Yishuv. The only element likely to make so rash an attempt to streamline the people "whom no king could rule" are the Revisionists with the help of or at the bidding of the I.Z.L. and Stern Group. The latter, as you know, are largely financed by the Soviets and take their orders from them. The attempt is, however, unlikely to be made and still less likely to succeed as long as the present leaders are able to maintain the frontiers of the State of Israel. The reported absorption of the

Stern Group (within the frontiers of the Jewish State) into the Haganah and the expectation that the I.Z.L. will have a similar fate will not materially affect the issue since both organisations are capable of going underground within the Haganah.

6. It is, in short, as difficult and indeed as unfair to pass judgment on the future of democracy in the Jewish State at this period of its existence as it would have been to have done likewise in the United Kingdom during the recent war.

E 7834/8/31

No. 13

### PALESTINE: TERMINATION OF BRITISH MANDATE AND WITHDRAWAL OF HIGH COMMISSIONER

*Consul Beaumont to Mr. Bevin. (Received 11th June)*

(No. 2) *Jerusalem, 29th May, 1948.*  
Sir,

I have the honour to report for your information that at about ten minutes past eight o'clock local time on 14th May, Sir Alan Cunningham, His Majesty's High Commissioner for Palestine, passed the gate of this building on his way out of Jerusalem. A colour-party of the Suffolk Regiment bearing flags of the New Zealand War and the First World War inscribed with the regimental battle honours gave the salute as he passed. A few bedraggled Arabs who happened to have gathered near the Damascus Gate, raised a feeble cheer. It is difficult to assess their motive, gratitude to the last representative of the British mandate or relief at his departure. As a sentimentalist, I incline to believe the former. It was a pathetic epilogue to nigh thirty years of toil and sacrifice.

2. Within a few hours the Suffolk Regiment had packed up and the last vestige of British military authority in Palestine followed hard on the heels of the civil. With them went the cease-fire they had so painstakingly arranged. For within two hours firing and mortaring had begun.

3. The cease-fire in Jerusalem had come into being not as a result of any agreement between the two factions but had been imposed by the authority of the British military commanders and had been tacitly accepted by both sides. It is idle, therefore, to speculate at any length whether its

rupture could have been avoided. I consider it scarcely possible but there is a small chance that it might have been, if the police and military authorities had had the opportunity and the time to install in the premises they vacated either the owners of those premises or persons of a neutral and innocuous nature whom both the Arabs and the Jews would have been loath to disturb. The civil administration handed over to the International Red Cross the buildings which had housed the High Commissioner and the secretariat and which have remained inviolate to this day. The Russian compound, containing police headquarters and the various buildings occupied by military were, however, left empty and, so far as the northern half of the city is concerned, the occupation by the Jewish forces of the Russian compound and subsequently of the *Hospice* of Notre Dame de France was certainly one of the major factors which led to a resumption of hostilities.

4. From that moment on the morning of 14th May, the staff of this consulate retired within the gates of the compound. Most of them have not left it since. About seventy persons, for the most part total strangers to each other, were left to knit up under peculiar circumstances their personal relationships and to settle themselves as comfortably as possible for an unpredictable "duration."

I have, &c.  
R. A. BEAUMONT.

1. The following is a list of the members of the staff of the Consulate General of the United Kingdom in Jerusalem.

E 7835/1/31

No. 14

### JERUSALEM: CAPTURE OF JEWISH QUARTER OF OLD CITY

*Mr. Beaumont to Mr. Bevin. (Received 11th June)*

No. 3)

Sir, *Jerusalem, 30th May, 1948.*

In my telegram No. 115 of 28th May I reported the surrender of the Jewish quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem to the Arab Legion. In the present despatch I have the honour to deal in some detail with the considerations which led to its defence by the Jewish forces and the events which, on 28th May, ended in its capitulation. If I have in the ensuing paragraphs treated at great length what must be conceded to have been militarily a trivial operation, it is because I feel it fitting that a tale of conflict and destruction involving this above all other ancient cities should have permanent record in a form as nearly objective as possible.

2. As among the believers in the other revealed religions, there are among the Jews many who have always deplored the idea of fighting in the Old City, and who have held that being in the minority the Jews would be wrong in seeking to defend it since their defence would inevitably entail great destruction. In the first place, there are those, mainly of the orthodox Jewish persuasion, to whom the idea of a Jewish State and, in particular, a Zionist State is unattractive. To them the decision to defend the Old City, stemming as it did from political rather than religious motives, was anathema. Secondly, there are others among responsible Jews who have been intimately connected with the municipal development of Jerusalem over the last thirty years. They took the view that it was foolish for either Jew or Arab to contend for a city which by its nature and by the decision of the United Nations Organisation is destined to be neither Jewish or Arab. They deplored a struggle which would undo both spiritually and materially what the combined efforts of all communities have over many years constructed. To this purely social reasoning some added a religious regard for the peculiar sanctity of the Old City. Finally, there are the inhabitants of the Jewish quarter of the Old City, for the most part orthodox Jews whose families have lived there for generations. Not unnaturally they were loath to see their homes sacrificed to Zionist heroics. They recalled that in previous times of trouble they had con-

tributed to live on good terms with their Arab neighbours and were convinced that they could do so again were it not for the presence of alien defenders from Haganah or Irgun Zvai Leumi in their midst. Even prior to the termination of the mandate their Mukhtar, Mr. A. Weingarten, in conversation with British officials had made no secret of the fact that this was his view.

3. This good sense, these religious and humane sentiments were overruled by the overweening confidence of the Jewish political and religious leaders. Materially, they reckoned that their forces would in

the briefest delay overcome all irregular Arab resistance outside the walls of the Old City and then set up a line of supply to the defenders within. Spiritually, for them the Jewishness of Jerusalem and their ability to uphold it had become articles of faith derived from an unexpressed and perhaps unconscious inner conviction that Jerusalem must be the capital of the Jewish State. It must, however, be admitted in fairness to the Jewish Agency that if there were among its members those who wished to spare the Old City the horrors of a conflict, their hands were bound by the fact that within its walls Irgun Zvai Leumi had come to a local and independent understanding with the Haganah for its defence and, whatever the official Jewish attitude, were unlikely to give it up without a struggle.

4. Thus the faith among the Jews, which, in its purely religious form might have reprieved the Jewish Old City, led, when transmuted into its political form, to its destruction.

5. The cleavage in the Jewish attitude, apparent before the operations which began on 14th May, persisted throughout them. Within the Old City Jewish forces resisted Arab attempts at occupation; without, the Haganah by 17th May had seized the Mamilla Road and, to establish their supply line, attacked the Jaffa Gate in strength on 18th May. They were repulsed, but a further attack made on the following day at Zion Gate was successful to the extent that a Jewish commando was able to take munitions and supplies to the defenders. The Jewish Agency at this juncture saw a suitable opportunity for a cease-fire which might bring military

the Yishuv. The only element likely to make so rash an attempt to streamline the people "whom no king could rule" are the Revisionists with the help of or at the bidding of the I.Z.L. and Stern Group. The latter, as you know, are largely financed by the Soviets and take their orders from them. The attempt is, however, unlikely to be made and still less likely to succeed as long as the present leaders are able to maintain the frontiers of the State of Israel. The reported absorption of the

E 7834/8/31

No. 13

**PALESTINE: TERMINATION OF BRITISH MANDATE AND WITHDRAWAL OF HIGH COMMISSIONER**

*Consul Beaumont to Mr. Bevin. (Received 11th June)*

(No. 2)

*Jerusalem,  
29th May, 1948.*

I have the honour to report for your information that at about ten minutes past eight o'clock local time on 14th May, Sir Alan Cunningham, His Majesty's High Commissioner for Palestine, passed the gate of this building on his way out of Jerusalem. A colour-party of the Suffolk Regiment bearing flags of the New Zealand War and the First World War inscribed with the regimental battle honours gave the salute as he passed. A few bedraggled Arabs who happened to have gathered near the Damascus Gate, raised a feeble cheer. It is difficult to assess their motive, gratitude to the last representative of the British mandate or relief at his departure. As a sentimentalist, I incline to believe the former. It was a pathetic epilogue to nigh thirty years of toil and sacrifice.

2. Within a few hours the Suffolk Regiment had packed up and the last vestige of British military authority in Palestine followed hard on the heels of the civil. With them went the cease-fire they had so painstakingly arranged. For within two hours firing and mortaring had begun.

3. The cease-fire in Jerusalem had come into being not as a result of any agreement between the two factions but had been imposed by the authority of the British military commanders and had been tacitly accepted by both sides. It is idle, therefore, to speculate at any length whether its

Stern Group (within the frontiers of the Jewish State) into the Haganah and the expectation that the I.Z.L. will have a similar fate will not materially affect the issue since both organisations are capable of going underground within the Haganah

6. It is, in short, as difficult and indeed as unfair to pass judgment on the future of democracy in the Jewish State at this period of its existence as it would have been to have done likewise in the United Kingdom during the recent war.

E 7835/1/31

No. 14

**JERUSALEM: CAPTURE OF JEWISH QUARTER OF OLD CITY**

*Mr. Beaumont to Mr. Bevin. (Received 11th June)*

(No. 3)

*Sir,  
Jerusalem, 30th May, 1948.*

In my telegram No. 115 of 28th May I reported the surrender of the Jewish quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem to the Arab Legion. In the present despatch I have the honour to deal in some detail with the considerations which led to its defence by the Jewish forces and the events which, on 28th May, ended in its capitulation. If I have in the ensuing paragraphs treated at great length what must be conceded to have been militarily a trivial operation, it is because I feel it fitting that a tale of conflict and destruction involving this above all other ancient cities should have permanent record in a form as nearly objective as possible.

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trived to live on good terms with their Arab neighbours and were convinced that they could do so again were it not for the presence of alien defenders from Haganah or Irgun Zvai Leumi in their midst. Even prior to the termination of the mandate their Mukhtar, Mr. A. Weingarten, in conversation with British officials had made no secret of the fact that this was his view.

3. This good sense, these religious and humane sentiments were overruled by the overweening confidence of the Jewish political and religious leaders. Materially, they reckoned that their forces would in the briefest delay overcome all irregular Arab resistance outside the walls of the Old City and then set up a line of supply to the defenders within. Spiritually, for them the Jewishness of Jerusalem and their ability to uphold it had become articles of faith derived from an unexpressed and perhaps unconscious inner conviction that Jerusalem must be the capital of the Jewish State. It must, however, be admitted in fairness to the Jewish Agency that if there were among its members those who wished to spare the Old City the horrors of a conflict, their hands were bound by the fact that within its walls Irgun Zvai Leumi had come to a local and independent understanding with the Haganah for its defence and, whatever the official Jewish attitude, were unlikely to give it up without a struggle.

4. Thus the faith among the Jews, which, in its purely religious form might have reprieved the Jewish Old City, led, when transmuted into its political form, to its destruction.

5. The cleavage in the Jewish attitude, apparent before the operations which began on 14th May, persisted throughout them. Within the Old City Jewish forces resisted Arab attempts at occupation; without, the Haganah by 17th May had seized the Mamilla Road and, to establish their supply line, attacked the Jaffa Gate in strength on 18th May. They were repulsed, but a further attack made on the following day at Zion Gate was successful to the extent that a Jewish commando was able to take munitions and supplies to the defenders. The Jewish Agency at this juncture saw a suitable opportunity for a cease-fire which might bring military

I have, &c.  
R. A. BEAUMONT.

advantage and at the same time have the appearance of a gesture to the world at large. They therefore informed the president of the United Nations Truce Commission that they had established a "firm line of communication between the old and new city," and would consent to a cease-fire on the sole condition that this line of communication was maintained. Time was against the success of this proposal. The president of the Truce Commission was unable to reach the Arab lines to deliver it, and after great delay I was entrusted with conveying it to the Arab Legion commander in the Old City. By this time, however, it had become evident that the line of communication established was anything but "firm," and the proposal was rejected out of hand.

6. It was at this time that the Arab Legion took over the direction of affairs in the Old City and Arab tactics changed. Instead of the mortaring and shelling of the previous days, works of demolition were started which, according to Arab sources, had the double advantage of clearing a field of fire in preparation against an eventual Jewish counter-attack and also burying under the debris a number of the Jewish defenders, who were believed to lurk by day in the cellars and underground passages in which the Old City abounds.

7. This new policy gave unpleasant substance to the fears of the Jewish Mukhtar and those who had opposed the idea of Jewish resistance. Daily from 19th to 28th May demolitions continued, twenty or more loud explosions and clouds of dust each day. Many an ancient building must inevitably have succumbed. On 20th May the Madrash Porath Joseph Synagogue was reduced to a gaping shell. On 24th the officer commanding the Arab Legion in the area sent word to the Jewish authorities by way of the Red Cross that he would be obliged to bombard the vast Synagogue Hurvat Israel (Desolation of Israel—so called because of its condition for ages before the tolerant régime of Mohamed Ali the Great allowed its reconstruction) unless they removed their armed men from it. His message remained unanswered, and on 27th May, after a comparatively small explosion, the enormous dome and superstructure of the synagogue suddenly disappeared. The Jews, for their part, claim that this was a piece of wanton destruction staged for the benefit of King Abdullah, who that day visited the Old City.

8. Throughout this period the local Jewish authorities within the walls were continually putting forward to the Arabs independent proposals for a cease-fire devoid of political considerations such as attached to the Jewish Agency's. Two of these were reported in my telegram No. 35 of 18th May. The first of them was made to the local Arabs, and the second to the Arab Legion. The president of the Truce Commission happened to be in the Arab quarter on the evening of 16th-17th May and sought the approbation of the Jewish Agency for these proposals, but this was refused. Other cease-fire suggestions were made to the *Custos di Terra Santa* by the Chief Rabbi while the Chief Rabbi of the Orthodox Jews (Agudath Israel) appealed to the Anglican bishop to use his influence to stop the fighting. Neither of these *démarches* bore fruit.

9. Nevertheless, when the eventual capitulation took place on 28th May, it was as a result of proposals made by the local Jewish authorities in the Old City and without reference to the Jewish Agency or the Higher Command of the Haganah. Indeed, that very morning a spokesman of the Irgun Zvai Leumi, in a press conference at the Public Information Office of the Jewish Agency, had declared that orders had been given that there should be no surrender and no retreat, and that those who retreated would be shot. Two Rabbis of the Jewish old quarter and Mr. Wein-garten, who were later joined by the local Haganah commander, opened the negotiations. Both Arabs and Jews invoked the aid of the International Red Cross and of Señor Azcarate, secretary of the Truce Commission, who by chance was in the Arab quarter. Fearing a massacre of Jews by the local Arab inhabitants to the cry of "Remember Deir Yasin," the Red Cross arranged for a cordon of the Arab Legion to be thrown round the Jewish area and for a curfew to be proclaimed in the whole of the Old City.

10. The evacuation of Jewish women and children and the removal of the wounded from the Jewish hospital to the Armenian school was, according to Señor Azcarate, who, with the Red Cross delegate, witnessed it, carried out in a manner highly creditable to the Arab Legion and its commander, Major Abdullah Tel. It was not, however, entirely without incident. For at 9 p.m. local Arab time (1900 hours G.M.T.) firing broke out at the Zion Gate. The Arab Legion assert that the Jews launched

attacks on the four city gates between Zion Gate and Damascus Gate thinking to catch the legion at a disadvantage; the Jews claim that Arab irregulars shot at the cars bearing away the Jewish women and children. The most probable, or at least the most charitable, explanation of the incident is that it was the result of nervousness on both sides. In any case, when the firing started Major Tel informed the president of the Truce Commission that unless the Jewish "attack" were called off he would be obliged to jettison the evacuation operation and leave the Jewish civilians to the mercy of the local Arab population. Calm was restored within an hour.

11. It is difficult to form an estimate of the numbers involved in the operation of evacuation. The International Red Cross state that about 2,000 old people, women and children were handed over to the Jewish authorities in the new Jewish quarter. Jewish sources put the figure at about 1,200, which agrees more closely with the former estimates of the number of Jews left in the Old City. There is also a discrepancy in the number of prisoners taken, but a well-informed Arab source has stated that 289 men were transported to Amman. The number of wounded who were handed back to the Jewish authorities on 29th May was almost certainly about 140. The Jewish Agency claimed that this return of wounded was a condition of the cease fire, but the Red Cross state that it was a voluntary gesture on the part of the Arab Legion.

12. The attitude of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem towards the cease-fire was very guarded. Neither of the local broadcasting stations mentioned it in their news of 28th May night, though the Voice of Israel from Tel Aviv did announce it, attributing it to exhaustion of supplies of munitions, food and water, and to heavy casualties. The agency, at a specially convened press conference on 29th May, the Jewish sabbath, stated that the surrender was the result of lack of ammunition, and that the supply position had been satisfactory. The spokesman was at pains to

lay the blame for it on the mandatory administration, which had acquiesced in the siege of the Jewish quarter while permitting the free passage of arms to the Arab quarters. He was, however, not entirely unappreciative of the manner in which the Arab Legion had carried out the operation and of reported British efforts to exercise a restraining influence on the Arabs. The spokesman confirmed that the negotiations had not been undertaken nor the conditions of surrender agreed by the Jewish Agency, but added, when questioned by the press, that the agency concurred in the conditions *ex post facto*.

13. When the removal of the inhabitants and the defenders had been completed, the Arab Legion withdrew their cordon from the quarter with the results that can be imagined. The local Arab population streamed in, bent on loot. Large fires and smoke were visible in the Jewish quarter from this consulate for the next twenty-four hours.

14. I cannot believe that the Arab capture of the Jewish Old City of Jerusalem will serve any useful military purpose. On the contrary, it may well have given to the intensely non-combatant lawyer or school-master of Damascus and Bagdad that fillip to vanity which may lead them to insist on their Governments carrying on a war which lack of supplies may render militarily disastrous ere long. Nor do I believe that defence of their part of the Old City has served any military purpose from the Jewish point of view, though I suspect that this latest destruction of Jerusalem will long rankle in the minds of Jewry. Perhaps if peace is restored and the ravages of war can be swiftly repaired, it may take its place alongside the story of the Macabees and the Warsaw Ghetto as a heroic episode in the annals of the Jews. In either event its memory will outlast the recollection of lives that were saved.

15. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Minister in charge of the British Middle East Office at Cairo.

I have, &c.

R. A. BEAUMONT.

No. 15

**ANGLO-JEWISH RELATIONS: THE ADVANTAGES OF  
ESTABLISHING REPRESENTATION AT TEL AVIV**

*Sir H. Dow to Mr. Bevin. (Received 12th June)*

(No. 170) *Jerusalem,  
Telegraphic* 12th June, 1948.  
Repeated to Haifa.

I have been giving some thought to future British relations with the Jews and to the question of keeping contact with developments in Jewish political life.

2. It can, I think, be taken for granted that some form of Jewish Government has come to stay. It is also almost certain that their political and administrative centre will be Tel Aviv where their administrative and information services and their press are already installed.

3. The political values of the Jewish Government must be of interest and importance to His Majesty's Government, which offers the best field for Russian penetration and the area under its control will almost certainly lie athwart the pipeline and will be within striking distance of Egypt and Cyprus. If, as is suggested in your telegram No. 83, totalitarian tendencies appear in Jewish politics, the importance of obtaining the best possible information about them will be enhanced.

4. As Jerusalem is likely to be an international city with politics of its own, it seems to be unlikely that the British representative here will ever be able to cover adequately political developments in Tel Aviv. At present the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem takes its orders from Tel Aviv and is politically not in the picture. This is likely to become increasingly true. His Majesty's Consul-General at Haifa is probably better placed to obtain information about Jewish politics but I should imagine that even he is not well informed, and is and will continue to be too far from

E 7942/6080/31

No. 16

**RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL**

*Mr. Scott to Mr. Bevin. (Received 12th June)*

(No. 338)  
(Telegraphic)

My despatch No. 124 of 24th May.

The Finnish Government has decided to recognise "Israel" *de facto*.

*Helsingfors,  
12th June, 1948*

E 8626/1078/G

No. 17

**CONVERSATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR ON**

**16th AND 18th JUNE, 1948**

**Situation in Palestine**

*Mr. Bevin to Sir O. Franks (Washington)*

(No. 889. Secret) *Foreign Office,  
Sir,* 18th June, 1948.

Mr. Wright had an informal talk with the United States Ambassador about Palestine on 16th June.

2. Mr. Wright said that the wide implications of the Palestine problem as discussed with the Ambassador by Ministers and the Chiefs of Staff were very much in our minds. If Count Bernadotte's negotiations reached a deadlock and fighting broke out again in Palestine we should again be faced by the problem of the application of Chapter VII of the Charter with the grave dangers that that would entail. In addition, renewed divergences between the Americans and ourselves over Palestine would present formidable risks. None the less, while we had brought great pressure to bear on the Arabs to accept the truce, and would be prepared to bring pressure on them again to avoid a recurrence of fighting, we could not be a party to imposing upon them, or urging them to accept, a solution which we considered to be unfair.

3. With these considerations in mind we should like to find means of extending the area of agreement between the Americans and ourselves over Palestine.

4. Mr. Wright also suggested that we and the Americans should both decide together whether we should volunteer advice to the Mediator or to either party, or respond to requests from them for advice, before Count Bernadotte's negotiations started. We had already ourselves received a request for advice from Arab quarters. Our inclination was to abstain from advice at this stage and to allow the Mediator's negotiations to crystallise. Mr. Douglas took the same view.

5. Mr. Douglas came to see me on 18th June and had a further discussion about Palestine. I suggested to Mr. Douglas that it would be a great advantage if our two Governments could agree to adopt the following as their aim:—

(a) Any advice to the Mediator or to the parties should as far as possible either be joint advice or advice on

lines we have agreed on between ourselves beforehand.

(b) Unless a solution is reached within the four weeks, we should jointly take all possible steps to secure an extension of the cease-fire.

(c) We should exchange and pool all our information about developments. We were already keeping the State Department fully informed through the United States Embassy in London. We hoped the State Department would make sure that the Embassy received for communication to us all information available to them also.

6. Mr. Douglas warmly agreed and said that he would telegraph at once to Washington in this sense.

7. I added that we were anxious, as we understood the United States Government to be also, to see an international régime for Jerusalem agreed upon during the first four weeks of the cease-fire even if an extension of the cease-fire might be required to permit of other points being pursued by the Mediator. We felt, however, that an international régime for Jerusalem might more easily be accepted by the Arabs if the boundaries were smaller than those proposed by the Assembly resolution.

8. I then raised the question of Haifa. I had been considering this for some time past and it had now been brought into prominence by two developments: firstly, a request from the Jews to start up the refinery again for their benefit, and, secondly, an approach to us by the Iraqi Minister of Defence in favour of some form of free port at Haifa. In view of the great importance of the production of the Haifa refinery to the economy of Palestine and to world production, with particular reference to European recovery, the question of its future operation should in our view be dealt with in advance of a general settlement in Palestine. The best line of approach seemed to be that His Majesty's Government should inform the Mediator that,

while they did not want to intervene in his discussion of the Palestine question, they felt bound to let him know that they had been approached by both sides with regard to the refining of oil at Haifa, and that His Majesty's Government did not want to take any step in the matter until they had consulted him, in order that nothing might be done to prejudice his negotiations. His Majesty's Government could then point out to him that refining would not be possible unless there was some impartial control of the distribution of the product. This could best be done by setting up either a free port under an international administration for law and order in Haifa to include the oil tanks and the refinery, or an international régime covering the whole city, including the port and the refinery. The Jews and Arabs might be told that His Majesty's Government were referring the matter to the Mediator and that they could not discuss it with them directly.

9. I went on to say that I particularly favoured the idea of an internationally administered free port or free city of Haifa, which, if it could be established, might render an Arab acceptance of a general compromise more likely. It would be important to establish as simple an authority as possible in order to avoid international complications and possible Russian attempts to take a hand. As far as we could foresee, the ideal arrangement would be for the Mediator to appoint a Governor or Director answerable directly to him. The Governor would have an international police force under his command but in all other matters would rely upon the co-operation of the local authorities. The relation of some such arrangement to the United Nations would have to be worked out in due course, but I would hope that this need not prevent urgent action by the Mediator now.

10. An arrangement on these lines would be parallel to an international régime in Jerusalem, although His Majesty's Government need not connect the two in expressing their views to the Mediator at this stage.

11. After some discussion I agreed with Mr. Douglas that, in accordance with our suggestion that we and the Americans should as far as possible act in concert over Palestine, we would put these suggestions about Haifa to the United States Government for their very early views. As time

was pressing we would ask Washington to let us have their comments within, say, two days.

12. I also mentioned to Mr. Douglas that there were two special points among others which were in our view likely to arise in the course of the Mediator's negotiations.

13. The first point, namely immigration, had been raised with us by M. Spaak. It seemed to us that if the Arabs were to be brought to acquiesce in the establishment of a Jewish State a factor which would weigh heavily in the balance would be immigration. Events had shown only too clearly that Palestine was a world problem, and that it was of urgent concern to the world that a settlement by agreement should be reached. It might be necessary not only for the Jews and the Arabs to make a contribution and sacrifices to achieve this, but for other Powers to join in making contributions also. If there could be some fresh international attempt or agreement, perhaps sponsored by the Security Council, for the absorption of larger numbers of Jewish displaced persons elsewhere than in Palestine this might have a decisive effect upon the negotiations. The numbers were not really so large if they were divided among the different countries.

14. The second question was that of a guarantee of the frontiers of a Jewish State. The Arabs were intensely nervous, and not without reason, that immigrants would crowd into a Jewish State, economic and industrial development would proceed with the aid of American dollars, and in due course the Jewish State would burst out of its frontiers and attempt to enlarge itself at the expense of its neighbours. Indeed extreme Zionists had admitted this to be their aim. If, therefore, there were to be a Jewish State there ought in our view to be an international guarantee in some form of its frontiers (in both directions). Any international guarantee or assurance ought perhaps to be supplemented by some specific Anglo-American assurance.

15. I agreed with Mr. Douglas that the points in the two preceding paragraphs should not for the moment be raised in Washington and not in any case unless the scheme put forward by the Mediator included such proposals or resulted in their being raised by either party.

I am, &c.  
ERNEST BEVIN.

**CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE AMIR FAISAL**

**Situation in the Middle East**

*Mr. Bevin to Mr. Trott (Jedda)*

(No. 91) *Foreign Office,*  
Sir, *23rd June, 1948.*

In my despatch No. 79 of 2nd June I informed your Excellency of my conversation of 2nd June with His Royal Highness the Amir Faisal. After a series of informal talks with officials of the Foreign Office, the Amir called on me again on 18th June. I enclose herein a copy of the note to the Saudi Arabian Ambassador in London, in which, at the particular request of the Amir Faisal, I have recorded the conversation which took place.

2. I am sending copies of this despatch and of its enclosure to His Majesty's representatives at Amman, Bagdad, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus and Washington, as well as to the British Middle East Office in Cairo.

I am, &c.  
ERNEST BEVIN.

following situations he regarded as more favourable to Arab interests:—

- (a) the establishment of a Jewish State, whose boundaries would be determined by the United Nations and whose expansion would be prohibited by a guarantee endorsed by His Majesty's Government and possibly by the United States Government as well, if they were willing; or
- (b) the establishment of a unitary Palestinian State, where it would be impossible to restrain the efforts of the Jewish minority to seize control of the entire country.

I emphasised that I had not yet come to any decision but that, while reflecting on this problem, it had occurred to me that a joint guarantee by His Majesty's Government and the United States Government of the nature described above might possibly help to appease the legitimate apprehensions aroused among the Arab peoples by the idea of a Jewish State.

3. His Royal Highness replied that it was precisely the idea of a Jewish State which was most objectionable to the Arabs. The Arab Governments had not intended to send their force into Palestine, but had been unable to resist the demands of their own peoples. These peoples would revolt against any Government that accepted the principle of a Jewish State. Such a revolt would play into the hands of the Russian leaders, whose object was to bring about the overthrow of the existing Arab Governments and to replace them by others more susceptible to Communist influence. He asked whether it would not be possible to reverse my proposal for a joint United States and British guarantee of the frontiers of the Jewish State, by giving a similar guarantee, which the Arab Governments and peoples would fully endorse, of the rights of the Jewish minority in a unitary State of Palestine. I could not

Enclosure in No. 7

*Mr. Bevin to Sheikh Hafiz Wahba*

*Foreign Office,*  
Your Excellency, *19th June, 1948.*

Subject to your Excellency's consent and to any amendments which you may wish to suggest, I have the honour to propose that the following should be regarded as the agreed record of my conversation with His Royal Highness the Amir Faisal on 18th June.

2. As you will recall, having mentioned the informal talks which had already taken place between His Royal Highness and officials of the Foreign Office, I turned first to the subject of Palestine and expressed my agreement with His Royal Highness's view that this problem had been greatly aggravated by the unhappy plight of Jewish displaced persons, and might have been solved, had it been possible to find some other refuge for these people. I then asked His Royal Highness which of the two

agree with this proposal, which seemed impracticable in view of the attitude adopted by the United Nations. His Majesty's Government had so far consistently supported the Arab Governments, but it was essential to take a realistic attitude. The governing factor would now be the proposals to be put forward by the Mediator appointed by the United Nations. After he had made his proposals the choice facing the Arabs would probably not be very palatable to them. It seemed likely to me that the Mediator might propose something similar to what I had suggested. I emphasised that I was not asking His Royal Highness to commit himself in any way, but that I would be grateful to hear his reactions to my suggestion. His Royal Highness expressed his personal anxiety to co-operate in any way he could in order to find a solution to the problem of Palestine.

4. I then complimented His Royal Highness on the restraint shown by Saudi Arabia in refusing to exaggerate Arab victories and explained that one of my greatest difficulties at present was to prevent the lifting of the United States embargo on the export of arms. If this embargo were lifted and the Jews could obtain arms freely, the position would become very difficult. I feared that the military victories gained by the Arabs had been greatly exaggerated and emphasised the importance of taking a realistic view of the situation, while awaiting the Mediator's proposals and the new state of affairs these would bring.

5. Having recalled that, in the course of the informal discussions previously referred to, agreement had been reached in principle on the importance of securing the defence of Saudi Arabia both by strengthening her own forces and by making detailed preparations for British assistance in case of need, I went on to say that, whatever might happen in Palestine, it was essential to look to the future. Close and detailed co-operation between His Majesty's Government and the Arab States was essential in order to defend the Middle East. For this purpose Arab unity was equally important, and I expressed my pleasure at hearing of the forthcoming meeting between King Ibn Saud and King Abdullah of Transjordan. I hoped that all misunderstandings between the Arab countries would be speedily settled. Where defence was concerned, I had no desire to press for a formal treaty, provided that the

Saudi Arabian Government and His Majesty's Government could reach full understanding by other means. As soon as the tension in Palestine had eased, I hoped it would be possible for His Majesty's Government and the Saudi Arabian Government to embark on more comprehensive and detailed discussions of their mutual defence problems.

6. I then went on to speak of my efforts to improve relations between the United States Government and the Arab States and to modify the United States policy towards Palestine. The United States Ambassador in London had co-operated in these efforts and I thought that there had been a definite improvement in the last few weeks. I appreciated that the policy pursued by the United States Government on Palestine made it difficult for them to come to any understanding with the Arab Governments at present, but I hoped that, if this problem could once be settled, there could be a reconciliation between the Arabs and the Americans. His Royal Highness replied that the Arabs were very willing to co-operate with the United States, but that the policy pursued by the United States Government prevented any such co-operation at present. Moreover, the longer this policy was continued, the more difficult co-operation would become in the future. His Royal Highness then explained that his father had particularly asked whether His Majesty's Government had any message for the Arabs or any advice to give them, either about Palestine or on any other matter of interest to the Arab Governments.

7. I replied that I was unable to suggest any solution to the problem of Palestine at present, since I was still waiting to see what proposals the Mediator would make. As soon as I knew what these were and had had time to consider them, I would inform the Arab Governments of my views and of any advice which I felt able to offer them. In the meantime, I would like to make two suggestions. In the first place it might happen that no agreement on Palestine would be reached before the present truce expired. In this case I earnestly hoped that the Arab Governments would not resume fighting, but would consent to an extension of the truce. I further hoped that King Ibn Saud and King Abdullah would do all in their power to clear up the present misunderstanding between them, so that His Majesty's Government, who

desired to maintain the friendliest possible relations with both of them, might no longer be accused of favouring one at the expense of the other.

8. The meeting then concluded with an exchange of compliments and good wishes. I have, &c.

ERNEST BEVIN.

No. 19

## EVACUATION OF PALESTINE

### Final Withdrawal of British Forces from Haifa

Mr. Marriott to Mr. Bevin. (Received 30th June)

(No. 149) Haifa,  
(Telegraphic) 30th June, 1948.

At 12 [group undecypherable ? 40] to-day the Union Jack was hauled down from the Post Office at Haifa—the last building officially occupied by His Majesty's armed forces in Palestine. G.O.C. then said good-bye to me and was the last to board his boat from H.M.S. *Phœbe*, in which he sailed immediately.

2. May War Office be informed that I regard it as a privilege to have been attached to General MacMillan's staff? From him and from all ranks of the navy, army and air force serving under him I have received all possible help and kindness.

3. At his own request my United States colleague was present at the informal ceremony of departure and the G.O.C. and I were only too happy that he should be there.

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No. 20

## CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR

### Situation in Palestine

Mr. Bevin to Sir O. Franks (Washington)

(No. 1157) Foreign Office,  
Sir, 12th August, 1948.

In the course of a conversation with the United States Ambassador to-day I raised with him the question of Palestine. Last week I had shown him two documents on the very serious situation in Palestine, and he had indicated that his Government were also becoming gravely concerned about the action of the Jews.

2. I said that I felt that there was no way out of the difficulty but for the Mediator to make reasonable proposals which the Arabs, if they could not accept them in principle, could at least acquiesce in, and for the rest of us to guarantee the frontiers and give the Arabs as much assurance as we possibly could. I felt that only in this way could the problem be solved, but America must make up her mind to be perfectly frank and very firm with the Jews as to their aggressive actions. If

not, the whole situation would be misunderstood.

3. Mr. Douglas told me that his Government had received pretty good evidence of arms being sent in from Czechoslovakia. I said that this confirmed our own information.

4. Mr. Douglas also indicated that he was very concerned about the thousands of Christians, whose precarious position had been entirely overlooked by the Mediator, by the Churches and by the public.

5. I told Mr. Douglas that I thought it was remarkable that when Abdullah's troops were firing on the old city of Jerusalem to recapture it for the Arabs, to whom it belonged, the Bishops were screaming in protest, but now that the city was being bombed every day by the Jews the Church was completely silent. It was incomprehensible to me. In addition, there was also the question of the plight of

thousands of Arab refugees, and there seemed to be no indication anywhere that these poor unfortunate people ought to be regarded as victims of aggression. Could not public opinion in America be roused regarding the plight of these refugees?

6. Mr. Douglas said that he would communicate with his Government again on the whole question.

I am, &c.  
ERNEST BEVIN.

No. 21

### RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL

#### Reasons for His Majesty's Government's Refusal to Recognise Israel

*Mr. Bevin to certain of His Majesty's Representatives*

(No. 336 Intel. Secret) Foreign Office, (Telegraphic) 16th August, 1948.

Recognition of the State of Israel.

The following is for your confidential information on this matter about which speculation has recently increased.

2. It is essential we should not give the impression to either Jews or Arabs that we are about to modify our policy on this question. The Jews would immediately think that we were condoning the aggressive intentions of which they are at present giving too much evidence, and that they had only to pursue this policy for a little longer to oblige us to grant them recognition. This is our only major political card with the Jews, and it must be reserved for use at the appropriate moment when we may hope to get some worth-while and lasting settlement in return. It is equally essential that the Arabs should not believe that we are

about to take any such step. In order to reach a settlement of any kind we shall almost certainly need to use all our influence once more with the Arabs at the appropriate moment. Our stock of influence is at present low and must be gradually built up over the next few weeks. If we take any step towards recognising the Jewish State, or even if the Arabs had good reason to believe that we were doing so, exactly the reverse would happen and we might find ourselves without any influence at all on Arab policy at a critical moment.

3. This background information is, of course, on no account to be divulged but you should take the opportunity when it offers of scotching any tendentious rumour that His Majesty's Government contemplate any step at present towards recognition of a Jewish State.

No. 22

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

#### Extract from House of Commons Debates, 22nd September, 1948

*The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs* (Mr. Ernest Bevin): Three matters have been raised which I desire to deal with to-day. The first is the question of the German generals. I wish to inform the House regarding the four German field-marshals—von Brauchitsch, von Rundstedt, von Manstein and Colonel-General Strauss—now awaiting trial in Germany. In delivering the judgment of the court in October 1946, Lord Justice Lawrence, as he then was, president of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, stated that there was clear and convincing

evidence that many of the German General Staff were not only guilty of planning and waging an aggressive war, but also of "committing war crimes and crimes against humanity." He added: "where the facts warranted it, these men should be brought to trial, so that those among them who are guilty of these crimes should not escape punishment." The four German officers I have named had been taken into British custody as prisoners of war in the summer of 1945, but at the time of the Nuremberg judgment, no evidence as to their complicity in war crimes was in the possession of the British authorities.

Following the Nuremberg judgment, the United States authorities set up an executive for the purpose of bringing to trial certain groups of war criminals, and during the investigations and screening activities of this body, a great many captured documents were examined, at Nuremberg, Washington and elsewhere. Among these was a large body of documents indicating the responsibility of the four officers for various grave crimes, and in August 1947 the chief of the executive forwarded a memorandum summarising the evidence which they had obtained against these officers, and, at the same time, calling attention to the passage in the Nuremberg judgment to which I have already referred. In October 1947, after consideration of this memorandum, it was decided to ask the United States authorities to include these four officers in the trials which they were then preparing of certain other members of the General Staff of Nuremberg. At the end of November 1947 a reply was received from the United States authorities in Germany, that they were unable to comply with this request as they had completed the indictment, and to have included the four officers at that stage would have delayed the opening of the cases which had been prepared.

A meeting of Ministers was, therefore, held in December 1947. My noble friend the Lord Chancellor advised that the memorandum of evidence prepared by the United States authorities disclosed a *prima facie* case against each of the four officers. Whereupon, it was decided that steps should be taken to obtain the evidence itself and to proceed to bring them to trial. A great deal of further investigation and preliminary work had to be undertaken, and, in the meantime, a doubt arose as to whether the officers were fit for trial, in view of their age and medical condition. A series of medical boards, therefore, examined the officers, and it was finally reported by the Director-General of the Army Medical Services, in consultation with the medical officers to the Home Office, in April 1948 that three of the officers were fit to take their trial, but, at that time, the fourth was not.

His Majesty's Government accordingly decided that the necessary steps should be taken to obtain the actual evidence on which the United States memorandum had been based, together with any other evidence which might be available, and that, if the evidence warranted it, the four officers

should be brought to trial before a British Military Tribunal in Germany, subject to the fitness of any of their number to stand his trial being dealt with at the time in accordance with the principles which would apply under our ordinary criminal procedure in this country.

*Mr. Pickthorn* (Cambridge University): The right hon. gentleman has been extremely good in giving us the exact date of each subject, and I am sure the House is extremely grateful to him. On the last subject he omitted the date. If he has not that date, well and good; but if by any chance he has it, I should be grateful if the House could have it now.

*Mr. Bevin*: I have not got that exact date with me. I will send and get it.

At the end of July, therefore, the four officers were returned to Germany, where they are now kept in military custody. I am informed that there are no restrictions on them beyond those necessary for their safe custody, and that they are in fact housed in a hospital. They have been demilitarised in the same way as any other prisoners of war who have been returned to Germany, in order to comply with the quadripartite agreement on the disbandment of the Wehrmacht. The same practice was adopted with military officers amongst the major war criminals tried before the International Military Tribunal, and with all members of the German armed forces who in the course of the last three years have been tried as war criminals by either British or United States courts.

The United States authorities themselves had registered cases against three of the officers with the United Nations War Crimes Commission early in 1947. The Polish authorities had registered cases against three of them in December 1944 and in December 1947 they requested His Majesty's Government to hand over two of them for trial by a Polish court. This request was declined as the question of their trial by a British military tribunal was then under consideration. The Russian authorities in Germany asked the British Commander-in-Chief and Military Governor to hand over two of them in March 1948; but this request was declined as they were not in the custody of the British Commander-in-Chief and Military Governor at that time.

It should be added, however, that His Majesty's Government were under an obligation to hand over alleged war criminals

against whom a clear *prima facie* case existed to the Governments of the countries in which their crimes had been committed, unless it was intended to try them before a British tribunal. The decision of His Majesty's Government was taken purely on the merits of the case after being advised that there was a *prima facie* case against them; and—this is very important—since some of their subordinates had already been tried and convicted of offences which might be proved to have resulted from their orders, His Majesty's Government felt it essential in the interests of justice that further steps should be taken to bring them to trial if the evidence warranted it.

As I have previously explained, the actual evidence is still being collated and examined, and for this reason the charges against the four officers have not yet been finally formulated. The officers have, however, each been given a notice outlining the general nature of the charges, and they have been informed that they will receive notice of the charges as finally formulated in due time to enable them to prepare their defence. They have all four acknowledged receipt of this notice. The case of these four officers will be the last to be brought before a British military tribunal in Germany. A number of other cases are still being tried but none has been started since 31st August. It has also been decided that the Military Governor will only sanction any further applications for extradition in the case of a person against whom a clear *prima facie* case is made out of murder as defined in the German penal code, but not otherwise. That is the statement I have to make on the German generals.

*Mr. Stokes* (Ipswich): May I ask my right hon. friend a question to which I was promised an answer yesterday? It is this: Is it or is it not true that at one stage the War Office doctors pronounced all the generals concerned as unfit to stand their trial?

*Mr. Bevin*: I should like to have notice of that question.

*Mr. Stokes*: It was given yesterday.

*Mr. Crawley* (Buckingham): Might I ask my right hon. friend—

*Mr. Bevin*: Just a minute. I am not quite certain of all four. There were some, and we referred them—as we do for a corporal or a private—to the medical board.

*Mr. Paget* (Northampton): Is there any reason why these men should not be given bail while they are awaiting their trial? They have now been incarcerated for three years; surely it is time that they were given bail while awaiting trial?

*Mr. Bevin*: If every poor prisoner was incarcerated in the same way these men have been he would not have much complaint.

*Mr. Stokes*: But it is three years.

*Mr. Bevin*: I must say, I do not understand this protest. I regret the delay in bringing them to trial. That I acknowledge. I think it should have been done earlier. But it is a very awkward thing to put a Minister in the position of sanctioning the trials of people who carried out somebody else's orders and not sanctioning the trials of the people who gave the orders. That is the situation which I, as Minister responsible for Germany, could not bring myself to adopt.

The second statement I have to make, before I get on to Germany, is in relation to Palestine. The right hon. Member for Saffron Walden (Mr. R. A. Butler), in his speech last week, raised the question of Palestine. At that time we were not in a position to give him an answer because we were aware that the mediator, under the directions of the Security Council, was considering the whole matter. Since that time a very tragic event has taken place—the assassination of Count Bernadotte. I should like to begin by paying a warm personal tribute, which I am sure is shared by the whole House, to the great humanitarian services which he rendered in his life to the Red Cross and elsewhere. His lifetime of disinterested service to humanity was an example to all those working in the cause of peace.

The assassination of Count Bernadotte and Colonel Serot—a French officer who had rendered distinguished service in the French army and in the resistance movement—has shocked the world, and it is felt particularly by the people of this country who have themselves suffered from similar crimes. Those responsible have placed themselves on trial before the world. The object of those who committed this crime was, no doubt, to prevent Count Bernadotte's task of mediation being brought to a successful completion, and the best way for us to commemorate his death is to complete his work on the basis of the proposals

which he put forward just before his death. The outline of the proposals will be known to hon. members from the summaries which have appeared in the press, but I am arranging for a copy of the whole report and proposals to be available in the Library.

At this point I would recall the fact that it was mainly on the initiative of the United Kingdom delegation to the United Nations that the appointment of a mediator was approved, with the terms of reference which have resulted in the work which Count Bernadotte has done to supervise the truce, and now to put forward these proposals. Anyone who makes proposals about Palestine always arouses criticism and disappointment, and has always done so in the past. We do not expect that either side will welcome these proposals *in toto*; but the world cannot wait for ever for the parties to agree; it is now time, in the view of His Majesty's Government, for a final solution to be found by the United Nations.

His Majesty's Government have carefully studied these proposals, and they believe that the conclusions must be considered as a single integrated plan, and that it would be best for all concerned that this plan should be put into operation in its entirety. The recommendations of Count Bernadotte, therefore, have the whole-hearted and unqualified support of His Majesty's Government. The House will have seen from the press that a similar view has already been expressed by Mr. Marshall on behalf of the United States Government. This problem cannot be solved by polemics. It is our hope that the United Nations will lose no time in throwing the full weight of their authority behind these proposals, but there are two particular points to which I should like to call attention.

Count Bernadotte refers in his report to the apprehension of the Arabs about future Jewish expansion, and concludes that every reasonable assurance must be offered them, not only by the Jews but by the United Nations. I have always felt that the Arab case has been insufficiently appreciated, and I entirely agree that the United Nations should give special guarantees. In one other matter I would insist on the unity of Count Bernadotte's conclusions even more emphatically than he did himself. He recommended that the Arab areas of Palestine, or the greater part of them, should be incorporated in Transjordan, but he suggested that the final decision might be left to the Arab States. In the

past, when His Majesty's Government have considered this problem they have always been faced with the difficulty that the Arab parts of Palestine by themselves, which are an unfertile area, would not form a viable state.

We therefore believe that the United Nations should avoid the risk of creating a State which could not support itself and should therefore endorse the Mediator's arguments in this matter. Count Bernadotte's recommendations about the treatment of Arab refugees deserve the most urgent study and action by the United Nations. The situation of these refugees is a great human tragedy. The measures which Count Bernadotte initiated before his death, and which his organisation are carrying on, provide only for their immediate needs. There is the vital long-term problem which requires the concerted efforts of all nations to solve.

Finally, I would urge all those concerned in the Middle East to study Count Bernadotte's proposals calmly and seriously and to lay aside all the influence of extremist propaganda. Though I cannot anticipate that either party will spontaneously express their acceptance of the plan, I would urge them, with all the strength at my command, to acquiesce in it and do nothing to upset it or prevent its implementation. We for our part are determined to do everything we can to see these recommendations brought to fruition. In the past, we have been slanderously accused of encouraging the use of force to settle the Palestine problem. I declare categorically that we have never done anything of the kind and that we never will do so. We are resolutely opposed to any attempt to prolong the present instability or to secure any other settlement by force or threat of force. The influence of His Majesty's Government is placed squarely behind the Mediator's recommendations.

*Major Legge-Bourke* (Isle of Ely): May I ask if His Majesty's Government's acceptance of Count Bernadotte's recommendations involves recognition of Israel, and, if so, will the right hon. Gentleman give an unqualified assurance that before any such recognition is contemplated he will insist on the release of the two British subjects at present held in Palestine and complete indemnification of them?

*Mr. Bevin*: The statement I have made does not involve recognition. It does involve the policy which the United King-

dom delegation must follow or be instructed to follow at the United Nations. We shall see what emerges from that, and in the next stage we shall have to consider subsequent developments.

I have now to turn to Germany. There are several matters which Members have been good enough to indicate to me they desire to be mentioned in this statement. There is the problem of reparations, the problem of Western Germany, the Moscow negotiations and the air lift. They have been the main problems which I have been requested to refer to in this statement, and I propose to try to give the House as much information as I can. I have from time to time dealt with the problem of Germany in this House, and I think Members are very well acquainted with the steps that have been taken to develop that country after the terrible war we passed through. But it may be wise to give just a slight background to the present situation.

Let me simply recall that not long after the beginning of the Six-Power talks in London, which were initiated owing to the impossibility of agreeing with Russia or of getting Russia to agree on the future of Germany, the Soviet authorities in Germany began to impose an increasing number of restrictions on the movement both of goods and personnel to and from Berlin. In spite of all this interference and of many other petty annoyances, we proceeded to carry out the decision of the London Conference. One of the steps which had been necessary for a long time was currency reform. A good deal of disappointment had been caused in this House because we did not carry it out earlier.

We had been trying to obtain Four-Power agreement on the conditions governing its introduction in all zones. We failed, and we decided to reform the currency in our own zones. When we did this we had no intention of interfering in any way with the Soviet currency in Berlin, and we are still prepared to have the Soviet mark as the sole currency in Berlin provided that it is dealt with under quadripartite authority. If we dealt with it in any other way it would mean that we should be subject to pressure just as serious as the blockade, and our administration could be paralysed. There, too, it proved impossible to obtain Soviet agreement to a uniform currency in Berlin under this condition.

We were thus faced with a difficulty, and we accordingly proceeded with the introduction of our own separate currency in the Western sectors of Berlin. In my statements to the House on 30th June and on 29th July I made clear the claims of the three Governments regarding their jurisdictional rights as occupying Powers in Berlin. The initial justification advanced by the Russians for this interference and for the imposition of restrictions was based on technical grounds. It was only later that the Soviet Union came more into the open and asserted that they had been compelled to take this action by our introduction of currency reform.

On 24th June the Soviet authorities, still speciously arguing that technical difficulties were the cause, announced the imposition of further restrictions which effectively completed the blockade of Berlin. What is the assumption behind this act? What did the Soviet have in their minds? There had been a careful calculation of food stocks and an estimate made of our ability to feed Britain under this blockade. It was clearly assumed by them that in a few weeks we should be in such difficulties that we should have to abandon Berlin, that starvation could be imposed so quickly, and disorder in the city fomented so easily, that our position would not be tenable. The Western Powers, after consultation, determined to do everything in their power to prevent these terrible intentions from ever being fulfilled.

The problem of surmounting the blockade has been formidable, and has been a very gallant and worthy piece of organisation. The Western sectors of Berlin have a population of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million souls, and we had to devise means of supplying them, exclusively by air, with food, fuel, raw materials and the other necessities of life. I am convinced that there were very few people—I doubt if there were many people in this House—who thought it would be possible to mount an air lift on a scale large enough to meet these commitments. What the British and the United States Air Forces have achieved, in ordinary conditions of peace, can be compared with some of the higher exploits of the war, and we have every reason to be proud of them.

What was the effect of all this? It showed conclusively that the people of Berlin did not want to fall into dependence upon Soviet Russia, since they knew that this was the first step to subjection. They responded to the efforts we were making

with a sense of relief. Life is hard and difficult for them, but I am bound to say that they have stood it very well. Moreover, their reaction has dismayed and upset the calculations of those who thought we would be out of Berlin in a few weeks and who, in defiance of their international agreements, attempted to dislodge the Western Allies from the rightful position which they held under the agreement for the surrender of Germany.

May I tell the House what has been accomplished by this air lift and the prospects for the future? During the last three months the United States authorities and ourselves have delivered over 200,000 tons of essential freight to the people of Berlin. The American share is 60 per cent. of this, and ours is about 40 per cent. British aircraft have flown 20,000 sorties and over 6 million miles. Stocks of most of the essential commodities in the Western sectors, including coal, are, I am glad to say, greater in many cases than they were in June, when the blockade was introduced. Looking to the future, the three Foreign Ministers have met in Paris. The United States Foreign Minister and myself in particular, whose Governments are in the main finding the aircraft for this purpose, have examined the air lift capacity for the coming winter.

While I cannot go into great detail—and I am sure the House will not ask me to go into detailed figures; it is not in the public interest to do so at this moment—I can say that if this senseless blockade continues, if there is no let-up, and the worst comes to the worst, we are confident, after careful examination of all the factors, and basing our calculations on the most pessimistic estimate of the weather—that by a combination of the two air forces, augmented, I am happy to say, by a tremendous effort on the part of the United States, we shall be able to see the winter through, although there will be some discomfort for the Berlin people. As I have said, for the first three months the British contribution has been 40 per cent. From now on the United States share will increase. (They are bringing in great C. 54s, which, instead of carrying  $2\frac{1}{2}$  tons, carry 10 tons per lift. The number of these aircraft will be increased.

I know the House is waiting for a report from me on the whole course of the talks with Generalissimo Stalin and M. Molotov in Moscow, and I crave the indulgence of the House because I have to

disappoint it. The stage has not been reached in which it has been made possible to make a release. We are engaged in close consultation. We have examined statements and counter-statements, and we are still working on this matter and shall be continuing our consultation in Paris during the coming week. I am, therefore, unable to go into detail at this stage. The presence of the three Foreign Ministers in Paris has enabled us to undertake a careful personal examination both of the details of the conversations and, what is more, to consider the blockade. We have called our advisers back to go into all its implications, to study the whole strategy, and anything we may have to do to counter the blockade or to counter other measures which may be taken to weaken our position in Berlin.

The position at this moment is as it was when I addressed the House on 29th July—that is to say, we regard the lifting of the blockade as an essential condition on which any settlement must be based. We have stated our willingness to have the Soviet currency in Berlin provided it is subject to quadripartite authority and, in addition, we have asked for, and insisted on, Four-Power control over trade between Berlin and the Western Zones.

I have noticed in the press and elsewhere that there have been rumours of disagreement between the three Western Powers, but I can assure the House that not only are we in absolute agreement as to the policy of the air lift, and about defending ourselves in Berlin, but also on the policy we shall jointly pursue if that fails. I am not, by that, saying that we are committed to war and all the other things that might ensue—we have not reached that stage yet—but we have made provision to save Berlin from the worst effects, indeed, to minimise the effects, of the actions of those who thought out this dastardly scheme to put pressure on their Western Allies who stood in with them during the war. It is a poor reward so soon afterwards.

I mentioned that I have been asked to deal with other subjects in addition to the air lift and the Moscow negotiations, and I now want to present to the House the brighter side of the picture, namely, the progress we are making in Western Germany. We have introduced currency reform. Hon. Members are aware of the prolonged efforts we made to reach agreement on the introduction of the reform on a Four-Power basis, and of the failure that followed. The issue of this new currency

in the Western Zone has met with remarkable success. Before its introduction money and wages had no longer any real value. Wages provided no incentive to work and prices were too high to give any encouragement to produce or sell. A large part of all available goods, including food, was sold in the black market.

All this has been changed. Money has a real value; consumer goods have come into the shops; manufacturers are producing and selling as much as they can; and the workers know that their pay packets can buy more of the things they need. I am glad to see that absenteeism has gone down and that the black market is nearly crippled. Coal production is nearer the level of 300,000 tons a day and a remarkable increase has occurred in steel production. It has risen from 377,000 tons a month prior to currency reform up to 510,000 tons in the month of August. This corresponds to a yearly rate of 6 million tons, which is the desired figure in the 1948-49 European Recovery Programme. We are confident that we shall see a steady further increase in the coming months. If things go on as they are going now I think we shall see a rate of 10.7 million tons much earlier than we had anticipated.

The supply of food from the farms is much better and the food situation is much improved. The confidence of the people is being shown by the gradual increase in bank deposits and a revival of life insurance. This great financial operation has created difficulties for some sections of the community. That I acknowledge. It has not worked out with equal effect on all alike. Now that we see the problem our experts are taking steps to supplement it in a way that will equalise the burden on all sections of the community, and the necessary legislation is being prepared. Psychologically it has had a marked effect not only in Germany but over a much wider area than Germany. Those Members of the House and others who have visited Germany recently have told me of the immense change they have seen over the last year. Apathy has given way to a revival of hope, and I believe the German people are turning with new hope and fresh heart to the reconstruction of their country.

The next point in connexion with Western Germany is the transfer of government to the German people. It is a very difficult thing to administer a foreign country. It is bad enough trying to administer one's own. It takes an enor-

mous lot of debate and energy in this House to make a success of it. In any case, having to deal with a devastated country like Germany and to bring it back into healthy life has, I can assure the House, been no mean task. We are, therefore, following the policy of transferring to the German people as fast as we can a large measure of responsibility. We believe that this is essential if democracy and responsible government are to develop on right lines.

I must again call attention to the results of the Six-Power Conference. This laid down certain basic principles to be observed in the framing of a democratic constitution. These provide for a governmental structure of a federal type which is best suited to the eventual re-establishment of German unity, and which will protect the rights of the participating States, provide adequate central authority and contain guarantees of individual rights and freedom. The Ministers-President of the States in their respective zones were authorised to convene a Constituent Assembly to draft such Constitution, and were informed that if the Constitution did not conflict with the general principles laid down by the Military Governors, the latter could authorise its submission for ratification by each *Land* by means of a referendum. After careful study the German representatives accepted with some modifications the conditions presented to them.

On this basis a Provisional Constitution, to be called a Basic Law, is being fully and freely discussed by the Parliamentary Council in Bonn. I am hoping that their work will be completed without delay, and a provisional West German Government may be established early in the new year. While we are anxious to encourage this healthy political development in Western Germany, we are still hoping that sooner or later a German United Government will be established, and nothing we are doing now or may do in the future will prejudice that.

In addition we have been engaged with our American and French friends in working out an occupation statute. The purpose of this statute is to define the relationship between the occupying Powers and the future governing body of Western Germany. The effect of it will be to give the German authorities maximum powers in all fields of government compatible with security and the basic requirements of the Occupying

Powers. The rapid and encouraging progress which is being made in Western Germany reflects not only the harmony between the three Allies, but also a growing sense of responsibility and leadership in the leading German political parties. The German leaders who are participating in this development are determined to safeguard the new constitution from any possibility of a return to a totalitarian conception of Government, and after the most careful inquiries we are satisfied that they are supported in this by the German people.

The next point is the relationship of Germany to the European Recovery Plan. We were determined that Western Germany should play a part in regard to the Marshall Plan. As I have already explained to the House, Western Germany is part of the plan and will participate in the organisation for European economic reconstruction. The whole future of Germany economy is, therefore, being examined by us in relation to Europe as a whole.

One last question about which hon. Members are concerned in connexion with Germany is that of reparations. Questions have been continually asked about it, and I desire to make our position as clear as I can, for it has caused very great concern. There are three principles connected with the question of reparations that must be borne in mind. The first is the industrial disarmament of Germany on the grounds of security; (2) the reparation to the Allies whose capital equipment and productive capacity had been damaged by Nazi aggression; and (3) the retention in Germany of sufficient plant to enable her to maintain a reasonable standard of life and to contribute appropriately to the rehabilitation of Europe. We have not departed from those principles, which were laid down in the days of the Coalition Government when we first examined this problem. We were never drawn into any punitive ideas like our friends on the Continent. This matter was dealt with by the Armistice and Post-War Committee when we were considering Germany's surrender, and while there were a good many punitive ideas we never adopted that attitude and neither have we since. The three principles which I have just mentioned were adopted in 1945 and they still remain the aims we hope to achieve.

For nearly three years we advocated a higher level of industry for Germany than any of our other Allies thought desirable. In 1947 we were unable to get agreement on the treatment of Germany as an economic whole. We worked out a revised level of industry plan for the British and the American Zones of Germany. The House has had that plan placed before it. In a word, it was 10.7 million tons of steel production, which was a yardstick for other forms of production in Germany. The previous agreement was 5.6 million tons. At one period, an even lower figure than that was suggested by some of our Allies.

When this 10.7 million tons was arrived at, we naturally had to work out what plants were surplus. It was on that basis that we laid our plans for the removal of surplus capital equipment, for the benefit of countries devastated by the war and who were entitled to receive reparations. It was not as much as these countries deserved to receive, having regard to the losses they had suffered, but it was as much as it was prudent for them to expect, given the importance of a healthy German economy to the future of Germany. What we have left in Germany we regard as essential to achieve that purpose.

Now, new problems have arisen. In the name of the European Recovery Programme, plans made for reparations over a year ago are now being called into question. As the bulk of this reparation has to come from the British Zone it is very embarrassing for us, because there is relatively very little of this work to be done in either the American or the French Zones.

I know it is argued that to pull down plant in Germany and at the same time to build up production so as to make Europe more self-supporting seems contradictory, but there is no real inconsistency in it. Take the economic side first. In spite of all these problems, Germany's industrial capacity to-day is in excess of Germany's peace-time needs. She cannot regain even normal peace-time production levels for some time, owing to lack of manpower and disorganisation. I would remind the House that there are large sections of industry not affected by the reparations programme, which are lying idle or are working at half strength. I would stress that. It is assumed, because we see a building pulled down that

in the Western Zone has met with remarkable success. Before its introduction money and wages had no longer any real value. Wages provided no incentive to work and prices were too high to give any encouragement to produce or sell. A large part of all available goods, including food, was sold in the black market.

All this has been changed. Money has a real value; consumer goods have come into the shops; manufacturers are producing and selling as much as they can; and the workers know that their pay packets can buy more of the things they need. I am glad to see that absenteeism has gone down and that the black market is nearly crippled. Coal production is nearer the level of 300,000 tons a day and a remarkable increase has occurred in steel production. It has risen from 377,000 tons a month prior to currency reform up to 510,000 tons in the month of August. This corresponds to a yearly rate of 6 million tons, which is the desired figure in the 1948-49 European Recovery Programme. We are confident that we shall see a steady further increase in the coming months. If things go on as they are going now I think we shall see a rate of 10.7 million tons much earlier than we had anticipated.

The supply of food from the farms is much better and the food situation is much improved. The confidence of the people is being shown by the gradual increase in bank deposits and a revival of life insurance. This great financial operation has created difficulties for some sections of the community. That I acknowledge. It has not worked out with equal effect on all alike. Now that we see the problem our experts are taking steps to supplement it in a way that will equalise the burden on all sections of the community, and the necessary legislation is being prepared. Psychologically it has had a marked effect not only in Germany but over a much wider area than Germany. Those Members of the House and others who have visited Germany recently have told me of the immense change they have seen over the last year. Apathy has given way to a revival of hope, and I believe the German people are turning with new hope and fresh heart to the reconstruction of their country.

The next point in connexion with Western Germany is the transfer of government to the German people. It is a very difficult thing to administer a foreign country. It is bad enough trying to administer one's own. It takes an enor-

mous lot of debate and energy in this House to make a success of it. In any case, having to deal with a devastated country like Germany and to bring it back into health life has, I can assure the House, been a mean task. We are, therefore, following the policy of transferring to the German people as fast as we can a large measure of responsibility. We believe that this is essential if democracy and responsible government are to develop on right lines.

I must again call attention to the results of the Six-Power Conference. This laid down certain basic principles to be observed in the framing of a democratic constitution. These provide for a governmental structure of a federal type which is best suited to the eventual re-establishment of German unity, and which will protect the rights of the participating States, provide adequate central authority and certain guarantees of individual rights and freedom. The Ministers-President of the States in their respective zones were authorised to convene a Constituent Assembly to draft such Constitution, and were informed that if the Constitution did not conflict with the general principles laid down by the Military Governors, the latter could authorise its submission for ratification by each *Land* by means of a referendum. After careful study the German representatives accepted with some modifications the conditions presented to them.

On this basis a Provisional Constitution, to be called a Basic Law, is being fully and freely discussed by the Parliamentary Council in Bonn. I am hoping that their work will be completed without delay, and a provisional Western German Government may be established early in the new year. While we are anxious to encourage this healthy political development in Western Germany, we are still hoping that sooner or later a German United Government will be established, as nothing we are doing now or may do in the future will prejudice that.

In addition we have been engaged with our American and French friends working out an occupation statute. The purpose of this statute is to define the relationship between the occupying Powers and the future governing body of Western Germany. The effect of it will be to give the German authorities maximum powers in all fields of government compatible with security and the basic requirements of the Occupying

Powers. The rapid and encouraging progress which is being made in Western Germany reflects not only the harmony between the three Allies, but also a growing sense of responsibility and leadership in the leading German political parties. The German leaders who are participating in this development are determined to safeguard the new constitution from any possibility of a return to a totalitarian conception of Government, and after the most careful inquiries we are satisfied that they are supported in this by the German people.

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we are just destroying Germany's capacity, but a number of other works are operating at only half strength, or are not working at all, which could be used elsewhere.

The removal of plant surplus to Germany's peace-time requirements will not affect the peace-time production of those things which Germany and Europe so badly need. We have to take into account the enormous intensification of production which went on under the Hitler régime. On the contrary, it may help to concentrate production and make for efficiency. There are plants now standing idle which Germany will never be able to put to effective use. If removed for reparations to other countries they can be utilised in a short time. We consider that, in the interests of Western Europe, such plants should be put to that use, to replace those which were destroyed in the war. From the point of view of Germany itself, there is no doubt that the sooner the reparations question is finally settled and the plants due for removal are taken away, the sooner will German industry get into its new and proper stride. That is why we deplore that this conflict has been going on for so long.

I must point out that there may be a few plants here and there which, because of certain shortages which have come to light in the last twelve months, might be more useful left in Germany. In these special cases we have always agreed to re-examine the problem in the light of the needs of the European Co-operation Act, but we do not regard the complete overhaul of the reparations level as essential. We have indicated our willingness to the United States Government to look at it, but we have always to keep in mind, as hon. Members saw the other day when the protest came from the I.A.R.A. countries—the other countries entitled to receive reparations—that their recovery was being delayed.

Therefore, in conclusion, I hope that, notwithstanding the gravity of the Berlin situation, this House will keep the whole question of Germany and Central Europe in their minds and in their thinking. I am sure—and we have seen indications of it in the press this morning—that there will be quite a number of manœuvres to upset the Western Allies in Germany and in Western Europe. We are going to have a terrific lot of propaganda, but we

are firmly resolved to go on with our policy. I trust we shall have the whole-hearted support of the House and the nation in doing it, because I am convinced that it is essential for peace and for our security for many years to come.

In dealing with the people who are contesting against us now, we cannot buy peace. It reminds me of 1940, after Dunkirk. I think hon. Members will remember it. The Prime Minister at that time was discussing the position that we were in, and he said: Whatever you give, wherever you go to meet the demands of the Nazis you cannot settle them. He was right. In the present case, to try going any further than we have done in making concessions of territory or anything else does not satisfy the demands. There is the conflict. We have to make our own position firm and secure. Berlin stands out as a symbol of resistance, a sort of salient. So far as I am concerned, I felt when that blockade was put on that a great choice had to be made. We made it. It was either to stand firm there or turn south and go to another Munich. That was the issue with which we were faced.

I believe that East and West have to live together. I am ready to live together. I am ready to say: "You live in peace in the territory you have got."

*Hon. Members:* In the territory you have got?

*Mr. Harold Davies (Leek):* Why not?

*Mr. Bevin:* Well, "Live in peace in the area you have got," if you like. I am not talking about any particular frontiers or anywhere else. I did not mean to draw any precise line. Certainly not. What I say is, "Let us settle that, if you like," but to settle a line, only to find that the next morning you wake up to demands, revolutions, stirrings of your people and upsetting of your institutions, and everything else to promote an expansion at a very cheap price without war, is a situation which, whoever occupies these benches, could not, I am certain, accept in the name of Great Britain.

It is common ground that we want to fight nobody. We have made probably the greatest sacrifice of any nation in the world for our recovery. I know that parties opposite may claim that they would do it better in this way or that, but

I think all are bound to acknowledge that the British people—the ordinary common man with all the disturbances of war, with all the devastation caused by the war, with all the lack of housing and lack of amenities and very often insufficient food—have made a gallant effort to rebuild their independence and

re-establish themselves. Indeed, in proportion to their wealth and in proportion to what they had to give, they have given equally with, if not greater than, any other nation in the world in the last three years. A nation like that deserves to survive. It shall survive whatever happens.

E 12523/4/G

No. 23

### Palestine Situation

*Mr. Bevin to Sir O. Franks (Washington)*

(No. 1356) *Foreign Office,*  
Sir,  
24th September, 1948.

I called on Mr. Marshall to-day in Paris, at his request, and, after we had discussed certain aspects of the Berlin situation, Mr. Marshall said that he would like my help over one aspect of the Palestine situation. He had read my speech in the House of Commons and thought it a good statement. His own difficulty was that the Arab States seemed quite unaware of his real position in this matter. Two Arab spokesmen in the General Assembly yesterday (the Syrian and Egyptian) had made really hostile speeches, and they seemed to think that he, Mr. Marshall, was pro-Jewish, whereas he was under very strong attacks from Jewish elements in the United States for propounding what they considered a pro-Arab solution. Mr. Marshall had confidential information that the President of Israel was making a direct appeal to President Truman, urging him to reconsider the American attitude announced by Mr. Marshall. Mr. Marshall therefore thought that it might have a sobering effect on the Arabs if they realised how he was being attacked by the Jews. His own feeling was that the solution on which he and I were now agreed must be the correct one, since it was equally attacked by both sides. He resented equally Jewish and Arab attacks, and he hoped that I would be able to bring the Arab States to take a more reasonable view. He thought the whole Palestine question must be settled very soon and that my speech should have helped with the Arabs.

2. I asked Mr. Marshall whether there was any fear of President Truman modifying present American policy in response to Dr. Weizmann's appeal. Mr. Marshall

said he did not think so, although there was always a danger of some unfortunate cryptic statements by White House spokesmen. I said that I would certainly speak to the Arabs in the sense Mr. Marshall desired. He should, however, realise that, although the Arab States had to make statements for their own public opinion, they had, in fact, moved very far from their old position. I had spoken very firmly to the Arab representatives in London and I thought they understood the position.

3. I was, however, suspicious of the new Arab administration set up in Palestine, which I thought might have Soviet backing and which was clearly intended to spike the guns of King Abdullah. We must watch this very carefully. Mr. Marshall commented that at his last conversation with the Israel representative in Washington the latter had explained the difficulty of the Israel position, since they had to steer carefully between the Soviet Union and the Western Powers. He had, however, assured Mr. Marshall that he need not fear that Israel would lean over to the Soviet side. I explained to Mr. Marshall that I had been thinking more of this particular Arab administration in Palestine, which was under the influence of the Mufti.

4. I then told Mr. Marshall that I had a problem on which I should be grateful for his help. This concerned our Consul-General in Haifa, whom we had sent there—as we had sent Sir Hugh Dow to Jerusalem—to maintain contact and to look after British interests, and in particular to keep an eye on the important oil refinery, although we had not formally recognised the Israel State. Our Consul-General in Haifa had been treated very badly from the beginning, in contrast to the Israeli attitude

towards our representative in Jerusalem and towards representatives we had sent from time to time to Tel Aviv. Recently the Consulate had been broken into by armed men and thoroughly burgled. The local police, who represented not Irgun or the Stern Gang but the Israeli Government, had offered no effective protection, and the Consul had had to burn all his official documents as a precaution. The recommendation had therefore been made to me to withdraw our Consul-General and close the Consulate. I feared, however, that, if I did this, the effect on British public opinion would be bad and would make it more difficult than ever for His Majesty's Government to recognise the State of Israel in due course. There was also the important point that, if our Consul-General went, the Iraqi authorities would be even more opposed to sending their oil to Haifa. That would cause economic difficulties in Iraq, and so make Soviet penetration easier.

5. Mr. Marshall said that this was a serious matter and he promised to take it up privately, probably through the Jewish representative in Washington. I confirmed that I, for my part, would speak to the Arab representatives as Mr. Marshall desired.

6. In the course of some further discussion about the unpopularity of Israel in the United Kingdom, Mr. Marshall told me that the position in America was complicated in so far as the Jews could still bring pressure to bear on the Administration and on the Republican presidential candidates. Congress, on the other hand, was strongly anti-Jewish and had made serious difficulties for him when he had tried to make immigration easier into the United States. This had been based entirely on anti-Jewish prejudice.

7. I communicated to Mr. Marshall later in the day an oral message summarising my

latest information about the present Arab attitude, as set out in the enclosed note, of which I did not, however, leave a copy with Mr. Marshall.

I am, &c.  
ERNEST BEVIN.

Enclosure in No. 23

*Palestine: Attitude of the Arabs to the Bernadotte Plan*

It cannot be expected that the Arab delegations will refrain from attacking the Bernadotte proposals in the General Assembly. This attitude will be demanded by their public opinion at home. But our first soundings of official Arab opinion suggest that the Arab Governments will, in fact, acquiesce in the imposition of the Bernadotte plan.

Telegrams from Amman and Cairo show that the attitude of King Abdullah is friendly and that the Egyptian Government have not reacted violently to our support of the plan.

Our initial contacts with the Arab delegations in Paris suggest that, while there is a good deal of disappointment at our immediate endorsement of the Bernadotte plan, there is a good chance of *de facto* Arab acquiescence behind a smoke-screen of verbal protest. The principal anxieties expressed by the Arab delegates so far have been—

- (a) That the Jewish State will pursue an aggressive foreign policy, and that there may not be adequate guarantees for the security of its Arab neighbours.
- (b) That the Jewish State may become a centre of Communist activity in the Middle East.

24th September, 1948.

E 12768/27/G

No. 24

**CONVERSATION BETWEEN MR. BEVIN AND SAYID NAJIB AR RAWI**

**(2) Palestine**

*Mr. Bevin to Sir H. Mack (Bagdad)*

(Extract)  
(No. 245)

Foreign Office,  
Sir,  
29th September, 1948.

The head of the Iraqi delegation to the United Nations General Assembly, Sayid Najib ar Rawi, came to see me in Paris

this morning in order to discuss certain points which the Iraqi Prime Minister had instructed him to raise with me. Before beginning, Sayid Najib conveyed to me a personal message of greetings and goodwill

from the Prime Minister, stating that the latter much regretted that owing to pressure of work in Bagdad he was unable to attend the Assembly.

5. The next point he brought up was, inevitably, Palestine. The Arab countries were, he said, deeply concerned with this vexed problem, and, until my speech before the Assembly supporting the Bernadotte Plan, had always retained some hope that Britain would help them. Had not His Majesty's Government declared that they could not agree to a solution which was not accepted by both Arabs and Jews? Now, Britain had come out definitely on the side of partition and the Arabs were all but lost. They were at the cross-roads, and needed desperately some sign of help and reassurance. As for the Americans, they had turned the rest of the world against the Arabs and had helped the Jews to power. The Arabs were most anxious to delay discussion of the Bernadotte Plan in the Assembly, and we could help them by not pressing for a quick decision. They fully appreciated our difficult position over the Palestine question, but just a small sign of help from us would be sufficient to change their feelings towards us and create an atmosphere in which our mutual problems could be solved. Sayid Najib went on to stress the importance of public

opinion in the Arab countries and the decisive part it played in major issues.

6. I replied that we could not hold up a decision on Palestine. The Bernadotte Plan was the best solution for the Arabs in view of the circumstances. What had happened? Fighting had broken out in Palestine and His Majesty's Government had done much to bring about the truce. I said that I wished to speak frankly; it seemed to me that the truce had saved the Arabs from defeat. Sayid Najib interrupted to say that the Arabs had not lost any battles (here I remarked that there had been no major battles) and that what areas they had lost had been due to bad leadership. As regards the Americans, I said that it was unfair to pretend that America was whole-heartedly behind the Jews; Mr. Marshall was being violently attacked by the Jews for his support of the Bernadotte Plan and the Arabs should realise that he was a good friend of theirs. We ourselves had done our best under extremely difficult circumstances; we had little thanks for what we had tried to do in the past, and we had not received very friendly treatment from our Arab friends over the last two years or so; perhaps this was so because friends quarrel more easily than strangers.

No. 25

**ARAB GOVERNMENT OF PALESTINE**

**A Conversation with Azzam Pasha**

*Sir J. Troutbeck to Mr. Bevin. (Received 6th October)*

(No. 394) Cairo,  
(Telegraphic) 6th October, 1948.  
Palestine.

When visiting Azzam last night to present Mr. Wall I took the opportunity to ask what was happening about the Arab Government of Palestine. He said that there had been difficulties both with King Abdullah and the Mufti both of whose pretensions he ridiculed. He thought that these difficulties were on the point of being cleared up after which the Arab States would recognise the new Government.

2. I asked him how it would hope to cope with the insoluble problems with which it would be faced. He replied at the worst it could be a Government in exile but the Arab States hoped to be able to transfer to it some of the burdens of administration in the occupied territories. When I pointed to the danger of the whole country, left as it would be without guarantors, being overrun by the Jews, he replied that the Arab armies would remain to resist aggression.

E 13348/375/31

No. 26

## RECOGNITION OF THE GAZA GOVERNMENT OF PALESTINE

*Sir H. Mack to Mr. Bevin. (Received 14th October)*

(No. 1023. Secret) *Bagdad,*  
 (Telegraphic) *13th October, 1948.*  
 Palestine.

It was stated in the local press of 12th October, that Council of Ministers had decided on previous day to recognise the provisional Gaza Government in accordance with agreement reached between the Iraqi Prime Minister and the Egyptian Prime Minister.

2. Prime Minister defended the above action to me on the following lines: Gaza Government was a shadow Government of no account whatever. What standing could a Government have when the Egyptian Government were able to remove its leading figure, the Mufti and his followers from Gaza to Egypt. Prime Minister assured me that the Egyptian Government would continue to take a very strong line in regard to the Mufti and that there would be no danger from the latter and his followers in future. Gaza Government would die in due course. Meanwhile it could do no harm. He thought most Arab States, including Egypt would recognise it if only as a lightning conductor. It must be admitted that the Arab States had failed in Palestine. The only result of their intervention had been that there were 750,000 refugees. They had let down the Palestinian Arabs and if the latter wanted to have a Government why should anyone object. It was a pity that King Abdullah had not shown more tact with Jamal Husseini and other moderate Palestine Arabs. Prime Minister said he could not understand why His Majesty's Government took such a strong view about the recognition of Palestine Arab Government. I repeated the reasons of which he had already been informed in Cairo.

3. Prime Minister went on to say that the Bernadotte Plan would certainly be approved by the United Nations and that

the chief question before the Arab States was how they could extricate themselves and their forces from Palestine. He was quite sure from his talks with Nokrashy that this was the Egyptian Government's view and that they did not want to hold any Palestinian territory. All they wanted to do was to clear out. Negeb and the rest of the territory allotted to the Arabs would go to King Abdullah, but he would have to use tact.

4. Prime Minister again asked how the Bernadotte Plan was to be enforced on the Jews. I replied on the lines of your telegram No. 1023.

5. I saw the Regent immediately after the above conversation. He said he was annoyed with the Prime Minister. He had sent him to Egypt with instructions to ascertain the Egyptian Government's attitude to the Gaza Government and then to ask for a meeting of the Political Committee of the Arab League to consider the league's attitude. Prime Minister had not done this and he himself did not know what Egypt's attitude was. His Highness had seen Nokrashy several times during his recent visit but had not discussed politics with him. He had not seen King Farouk as the latter was concentrating on yachting. Prime Minister had acted improperly in letting the press know that the Iraqi Cabinet had decided to recognise the Gaza Government without informing him in advance. He had not yet given his approval.

6. Regent said that he and the Prime Minister had lunched with King Abdullah at Amman on 10th October. No serious discussions had taken place and King Abdullah would only throw out a word now and then at lunch to keep the conversation going. An awkward meal.

E 13498/4/G No. 27

## CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE TRANSJORDAN MINISTER

*Transjordan's Suggestion for the Solution of the Palestine Problem**Mr. Bevin to Sir A. Kirkbride (Amman)*

(No. 176) *Foreign Office,*  
 Sir, *15th October, 1948.*

The Transjordan Minister called on me to-day and informed me that he had a message from his Government regarding Palestine, in the form of a suggestion for the solution of the problem.

2. This suggestion was a little difficult to follow, but it appeared to be on the following lines. Firstly, there should be no recognition of the Gaza Government, since it would be playing into the hands of the Jews if America and Great Britain were to give such recognition. Secondly, he proposed that we should support the annexation by King Abdullah of the Arab parts of

Palestine. He suggested that this should not be done at once, but that we should in the meanwhile consider its possibilities.

3. I asked Amir Abdul Majid what would be the effect on the Arab League if such a step were taken, and in what position it would place King Abdullah. I reminded him that we were bound to conform with the decisions which the United Nations might take about Palestine.

4. The Minister pressed for further study to be given to the question, and I undertook to let Mr. Michael Wright see him and get a little clearer indication of what he had in his mind.

*I am, &c.**ERNEST BEVIN.*

No. 28

## SITUATION IN PALESTINE

*The Position of Egyptian Forces in the Negeb*

(No. 1038) *Bagdad,*  
 (Telegraphic) *22nd October, 1948.*  
 Palestine.

Regent told me this morning that situation in the Negeb was very bad and that Egyptian army was quite demoralised. Jews were very strong in the air and were attacking from Bethlehem to coast. Azzam had to-day asked Arab States through their representatives in Cairo to come to the help of the Egyptian forces since Jews showed no signs of obeying United Nations cease fire order which had been made 24 hours earlier. Azzam's appeal had been made after a conversation with Egyptian Prime Minister and Minister of Defence and he said that it was made at their request.

2. Last night King Abdulla had telephoned the Regent and said that he wished to discuss with him defence against Jewish aggression which he feared would occur as soon as the Jews had polished off the

Egyptians. He also wanted to talk to Nokrashi but would not invite him to Amman. Would the Regent do so? Regent agreed and telegraphed to Nokrashi to-day proposing a meeting at Amman on 23rd October. He had no doubt that Nokrashi will agree and in that event he proposes to ask Syrian Prime Minister to join the party.

3. I said I was very glad to hear that King Abdullah laid emphasis on defence. I trusted that at the meeting the Regent would adopt the line of complete solidarity with his uncle. From point of view of Iraq and Transjordan it was essential that Jewish aggression should be patent to all the world and that there should be no doubt of who fired the first shot. I pointed out that Egyptian army had done little fighting in Palestine and that the Transjordan Legion had borne the brunt (both these points the Regent readily admitted) and that neither Transjordan nor Iraq owed

any sacrifice whatever to Egypt. I therefore strongly urged that there should be no question of anything more than defence on Iraq's part.

4. Regent agreed and said that indeed nothing more was possible in the absence of arms, equipment and ammunition. He asked me to tell you that he feared not only a Jewish attack but also the Iraq army. Latter, if attacked, could not hold out for more than a matter of days and their feelings if they had to withdraw before a Jewish attack through lack of ammunition could only too well be imagined. He there-

fore renewed his appeal for equipment for Furies and for 25-pounder and anti-tank ammunition.

5. The Regent made no unfriendly comments on his uncle. I had spoken strongly to Nuri Pasha (a ready listener) on this subject two days ago and I have little doubt that my remarks were reported to His Royal Highness. This evening he said, somewhat defensively, that the only difference between them was recognition of the Gaza Government.

6. The Regent leaves for Amman on 23rd October and will return the following day.

E 14252/11300/31

No. 29

### JEWISH POLITICAL PARTIES (31st OCTOBER, 1948)

Realignment of political parties in Israel is being brought about by:—

- (1) The emergence of an independent State calling for clearly-defined views on foreign and home policy which hitherto had been in the hands of the Mandatory;
- (2) impending elections to a Constituent Assembly (recently postponed until December or January).

The party groups which now promise to emerge for these elections are given below.<sup>(1)</sup> They are classified, as far as possible, from left to right in the orthodox, if rather controversial, use of these terms. Elements in the structure of the Jewish State which complicate this simple classification—and there are many—are mentioned later.

Historical details of most of these parties are contained elsewhere and will not be repeated here. Comments on recent developments and tendencies are given below:—

1. The simple division of parties according to their social policy has to be modified in the case of Palestine Jews. In the first place, there is no old landowning class; a great deal of agricultural and industrial development of the last thirty years has been on a socialist or semi-socialist basis, much of the capital having been supplied and controlled by or for Zionist organisations for a social purpose rather than for profit. Hence the power of the great trade-union-cum-co-operative organisation—the Histadruth—which has been in the past closely connected politically with Mapai,

though recently Mapam has been making headway in it; and the weakness in social policy of the right-wing parties, of whom the most typical are the more conservative groups of General Zionists. The alignment of political parties is not symmetrically from left to right, but from extreme left to centre-right, with the mean well to the left of centre.

2. The religious element in public affairs plays a larger part in the politics of Palestine Jews than in any Western country. In the Provisional Government of to-day two places out of thirteen have been allotted on a communal basis (to the Sephardi and Agudat Israel communities) and two more to religious parties (Mizrahi and Hapoel Mizrahi). It is true that the Messianic nature of early Zionism has become somewhat obscured by more mundane issues and is likely to decrease in importance as time goes on. But the religious influence in politics still cuts across normal political divisions. Religious parties and communities, for instance, have their own workers' organisations (e.g., Hapoel Mizrahi and Poalei Agudat Israel). If these organisations combine into a *United Religious Party* they may well provide marginal support for any political party from the left to the right which can catch their votes, whether this happens before or after the elections. Mizrahi, dominated by somewhat Machiavellian Rabbis, are likely to trade their votes in exchange for such concessions as the interdiction of public transport services on the Sabbath, or for higher grants to Rabbinical schools,

<sup>(1)</sup> See table, page 41.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
								Columns D and E as percentages
1. Israeli Communist Party	January, 1948	Jewish section of Palestine Communist Party (?) Hebrew Communist Party	3	...	...	1	2	(Very approximate) 3
2. Mapam (United Labour Party)	January, 1948	Poale Zion-Achdut Avoda Hashomer Hatzair ...	37	20	2	5	23	14
3. Mapai (Palestine Labour Party)	1930	...	63	28	4	10	35	28
4. Progressive Party ...	September, 1948	Aliyah Hadasha (45%) Haoved Hatzioni (30%) General Zionists* (25%) ...	18 3 7	5 1 3	1 2† ... 8‡	1 1 ... 11	24	18
5. United Party (?—name uncertain)	Still in negotiation stage	Mizrahi ... Hapoel Mizrahi ... Agudat Israel ... Poalei Agudat Israel ...	7 17 ... non-political	2 8 ... ...	1 1 ... 1	3 2 ... 1	11	11
6. Freedom Party ...	September, 1948	Revisionists (part) <sup>§</sup> Irgun Zvai Leumi ...	...	...	...	3	13	8
		Others ...	16	1	1 (Sephardi*)	2 (Sephardi & Yemenite)	5	5
			171	79	13	37	100	100

\* Two new parties were announced at the end of October: *The Radical Party*, formed by Mr. Gruenbaum from those General Zionists (Progressive) who do not wish to join the Progressive Party; *The Popular Party*, launched by Mr. Shireet (Sephardi) Community—Spanish and other South European Jews of long residential standing). It is not clear what popular support, if any, these parties will enjoy.

† Neither Minister has joined the Progressive Party.

‡ Includes one "Women's International Zionist Organisation."

§ The Right-wing of the General Zionists (The "Union of General Zionists") and some elements of the Revisionists who have refused to join the Freedom Party are unclassified. They might form together a Right-wing Group.

thus introducing an element of sacred corruption into the State. Perhaps it is this which explains the incongruous clause about compulsory Sabbath rest in the new Freedom Party's programme.

3. The cause of nationalist Zionism now unites the different parties on the question of foreign policy as never before. Even non-Zionist Agudat has expressed its desire to co-operate to the utmost with the Israeli Government. Until Russia withdrew her support from a bi-national State and gave it to partition, the incompatibility between Marxist internationalism and Zionist nationalism caused much trouble on the left wing. Indeed, among the Jews, naturally prone to factions, there appeared a split even in the normally monolithic *Communist Party*. The Palestine Communist Party dutifully followed the party line, and, together with the Arab League of National Liberation, advocated a bi-national State, while a small Hebrew Communist Party made an appearance with a Zionist, as well as a Communist platform. The Russian advocacy of partition solved the difficulties of the Jewish Communists, but created them for the Arab Communists. At the beginning of 1948 the Palestine Communist Party was rechristened the Israeli Communist Party; the Arab League of National Liberation had to go underground, whence it has only recently emerged, not in Arab-held territory but safely under the ægis of the Jewish authorities, to advocate Arab acceptance of the partition resolution. Towards the end of October, 1948, it was announced from Haifa that it had merged with the Israeli Communist Party to form an international Communist Party—this time, however, with a platform of partition in place of Jewish-Arab union.

4. It was not only to Jewish Communists that the Russian support of partition was a *deus ex machina*. Hashomer Hatzair, one of the parties merged in *Mapam* in January, 1948, had also advocated a bi-national State so long as that was official Communist policy; by the Soviet change of policy they, too, were relieved of a burden which they could not bear and survive.

5. There is thus clearly a strong Communist element in *Mapam*. Much of its propaganda is identical with Communist propaganda; the architect of the merger which created *Mapam*—Moshe Sneh (the Henry Wallace of Jewish politics)—if not a Communist, is indistinguishable from one in his actions and speeches. There have

been many approaches by the Communists to *Mapam* to form a united "Popular Front" to fight the elections, and these approaches have been supported on *Mapam*'s side by Sneh, who, it will be noticed, in spite of his place in *Mapam*, does not hold either of the seats which his party possesses in the Cabinet. No news has yet come of any success attending these attempts at coalition. Nor is it at all clear that *Mapam* is under Communist control. Much of its support comes from collective agricultural settlements where the sentiment, if Communist in spirit, is said to be not fundamentally of the Soviet variety. But in foreign policy party pronouncements are clearly the work of crypto-Communists or naïve fellow-travellers who display an exasperating ignorance of the facts on which they pronounce judgment.

6. *Mapam* is considered by many commentators to be the dark horse in the coming elections—if this description can be applied to a party which is already admitted to be runner-up (though, hitherto well behind the leader). Factors which influence forecasts of this swing to the left are as follows:—

- (a) Dislike of the Western Powers, mainly of Britain, but also to a certain extent of the United States, which often speaks with two voices on Jewish matters; satisfaction with Russia for consistent support—since last October—of a Jewish State.
- (b) The stream of immigrants in recent months emanating from Eastern Europe and the D.P. camps. Some Communist infiltration by this means is certain to have taken place, but there is no evidence available to show that it has yet successfully been organised on a large scale. That the majority of new immigrants will vote left is only a guess.
- (c) The political stalemate and the drying up of recognitions of Israel by other countries. New developments at the United Nations might considerably alter the support given to the dominant party in the present Government. Moderation by the Jewish delegation at Paris necessary to achieve a settlement endorsed by the United Nations is likely to lose votes in Palestine.

(d) Dissatisfaction with the corruption, nepotism, bureaucratic control and incompetence—real or imagined—of the present Government. There has been considerable press criticism on these grounds. These forces are believed to be reinforced by the mere desire for change and novelty—the swing of the pendulum.

7. In Israel there is also a close connection between military and political organisations. Thus, it is clear that *Irgun*—whatever part of it remains after its self-announced liquidation—is bound up with the Freedom Party. But the most significant of these bonds is that between *Palmach* and *Mapam*. *Palmach* is the spearhead of the Jewish army, estimated at about a quarter of its total strength, but possessing the best equipment, training and fighting-spirit. There were, towards the end of August, attempts made by the Government to destroy its separate identity within the Israeli army. But they were not successful; *Palmach* retains its own formations, and is potentially a strong arm of support, a "popular army," at *Mapam*'s disposal.

8. A further feature of the structure of the Jewish State is its dependence (in the past, at least) on finance from abroad, particularly from the United States. This has given more political importance to the right-wing, particularly in the World Zionist Organisation, than the numbers of their supporters in Palestine warrant. The over-weighted representation of the General Zionists in the present Provisional State Council is also evidence of this tendency. If *Mapam* were to achieve power after the elections and to insist on a policy of selective immigration from Eastern Europe (their own political supporters being selected) it is not known to what extent the financial sources of immigration, as well as of other projects, might dry up. It is perhaps partly because of the danger of immigration becoming a political weapon that the American Zionists recently insisted on the Jewish Agency Executive and the Government of Israel being separated. They succeeded in obtaining their demand; in future the Jewish Agency will be responsible for the selection of immigrants and administration of immigration.

9. The *Progressive Party* held its inaugural meeting on the 10th October, at which it was stated that it supports the Government's policy in foreign affairs,

while at home it stands for liberal labour legislation, social insurance, social assistance, free education, public control over capital, and private initiative. It does not appear to be at variance with *Mapai* on any of the points of policy expressed in this programme, though it may have some difficulty in reconciling the last two with each other.

10. The *Freedom Party* is controlled by the leaders of the *Irgun Zvai Leumi*, the child of the Revisionists which eventually swallowed most of its parent. Its foreign policy is chauvinistic; Beigin, the party's leader, at the inaugural meeting on 19th October, referred to Abdullah as the "usurper" of part of Palestine, with whom no agreement was possible; he expressed the determination of the party to fight partition and United Nations interference. He described Bunche as the "emissary of Marshall and Bevin," and saw no reason why the Jews should not appeal for help to Russia.

11. Aggressiveness in foreign affairs is the party's main election plank. Internally its announced policy is a semi-literate mixture of every conceivable tenet of democracy and totalitarianism, of tolerance and intolerance, designed by ignorant people in order to catch as large a number of votes on different, mutually incompatible policies as possible. Lip-service is paid to democratic institutions; but the sentiments of democracy are quite foreign to the party's leaders, who have been trained to use explosives more than logic as an argument—a method which they claim drove the British from the country, and which, on this claim, may bring them some votes. There is little, except perhaps nationalist and personal ambitions, to keep this party away from Communism—though even nationalism is not an insuperable obstacle, as it is now the ABC of Communist policy to stress national values. Friendship with the Soviet Union is the first plank in their foreign policy platform (after pious generalities). Beigin himself is said to have had connections with Communism in the past. The support it will gain in elections is difficult to forecast; Beigin has already announced his willingness to form a Government if called upon to do so.

12. *Mapai* is confident of retaining its predominance in the coming elections, in spite of the new rival claimants. If it succeeds in doing so, it represents too large

a vested interest, too well-entrenched a system, to bring about any sensational development in the field of foreign or domestic policy. Internally it tends to be paternalistic, and present circumstances provide a good opportunity for the practice of authoritarianism to which many of its leaders are sympathetic under a veneer of democratic phraseology. Externally its policy is empirical; it professes a sanctimonious neutrality in the quarrels between the Soviet Union and the Western World.

E 13849/27/93

No. 30

## ARAB POSITION IN PALESTINE

Sir H. Mack to Mr. Bevin. (Received 13th December)

(No. 340)

Bagdad,  
Sir,  
6th December, 1948.

I have the honour to report, with reference to my telegram No. 1141 of 29th November, 1948, that a joint meeting of both Iraqi Houses of Parliament was held on 24th November, 1948, to discuss Palestine.

2. Opening the debate, the Prime Minister first gave a short review of the whole history of the Palestine question. He stigmatised the Balfour Declaration as a British crime, complimented His Majesty King Hussein of the Hejaz who, he insinuated, lost his crown for the sake of Palestine, and blamed the Arab States for their lethargy during the mandatory period, when instead of concentrating on the salvation of Palestine they were preoccupied by internal dissensions and personal ambitions. Only the Palestine Arabs had fought the injustice, and they had been silenced by the oppressive methods of the Mandatory Government.

3. The Prime Minister went on to lament that even after the United Nations had decided on the partition of Palestine, the Arab States had continued to glory in conferences and propaganda instead of awakening to action. When, on the termination of the mandate, the Arab armies had finally invaded Palestine, proper military plans had not been made. Yet when the first truce was accepted, the Iraqi army was only 12 kilometres from the Mediterranean. The Egyptian army was near Jaffa, and the Arab Legion had already occupied Ramleh and Lydda and was threatening Tel Aviv. But for the

But the good of the party and the *bourgeois* way of life, outlook and interests of its leaders are bound up with the established order. Quite apart from the financial support of the *bourgeois* world, they are too well aware of these interests to wish to travel along the road to a "people's democracy." Flirtations with Russia are opportunist rather than ideological.

Research Department, Foreign Office,  
31st October, 1948.

whereby each State member escaped responsibility. He had, therefore, come to the conclusion, which he now re-emphasised, that the only hope for the Arabs was a full alliance between Iraq and Egypt. His efforts to achieve this had been frustrated. Egypt had wished to exclude military matters from the understanding and had suggested that no agreement should come into force until after the settlement of Palestine. Syria alone was prepared for unity of command.

7. Both sets of the mediator's proposals had been rejected, the second in spite of British and American pressure, because they implied partition. The aim of the Arabs was to exterminate the Zionist menace.

8. The Prime Minister then dealt with the accusations that the Iraqi army had not supported the Egyptians in the recent fighting in the Negev. The Iraqi army had, in fact, helped the Egyptians to the utmost, but it was further from its base than any other Arab army, and its flanks were exposed to Zionist attack. The Iraqi army was the largest Arab force in Palestine, and Iraqis could be proud of its work: all else was Zionist propaganda.

9. The Prime Minister ended by admitting that the present situation was very serious; the United Nations were trying to enforce on the Arabs an unjust solution on which, for the first time in the history of the United Nations Organisation, America and Russia were agreed. However, the Arabs still had an opportunity of saving Palestine through co-operation, unity of command, and a determination to fight to the last breath.

10. Senator Sayid Abdul Mahdi, a supporter of Saleh Jabr, who spoke next, also began with the "British crime" of the Balfour Declaration, and added that Zionism was incomparably more dangerous to the Arabs than the Crusades: Zionism and communism were "twins." He contrasted Arab victories before the first truce with their present plight, and British declarations that they would not support any solution not acceptable to both sides with His Majesty's Government's present policy. Still, the calamities of Palestine had come about through the Arabs' own fault, for they had let local ambitions stand in the way of the execution of the Bludan secret decisions.

11. Deputy Nasrat al Farisi (Bagdad) defended the acceptance of the first truce by the Sadr Government (of which he was a member) on the grounds that Iraq had

had to fall in line with the other Arab Governments in order to preserve Arab unity.

12. In a speech lasting two hours Senator Saleh Jabr defended the Iraqi Government's policy on Palestine during 1947, when he was responsible, and described his efforts at the conference at Sofar in September 1947, and Aley in October 1947, to get the Arab States to execute the secret decisions taken at Bludan in 1946. He quoted at length from his speeches and memoranda to the Council of the Arab League and deplored the unwillingness of the Arab States "to employ a weapon, which, although peaceful, was yet the strongest: namely, the power of oil which God has given to the Arabs." Iraq had been prepared to stop the activities of the oil companies, but Saudi Arabia had not. Again, in December 1947, he had warned the Arab League that guerrilla bands would not be sufficient to defeat the Zionists, and had drawn attention to the recommendations of the Military Committee, headed by General Ismail Sofwat, that the regular armies of the Arab States should prepare to intervene. Again, the attitude of the Arab States, except Transjordan, had been unsatisfactory.

After referring to the plans he was maturing when his Cabinet fell in January 1948, and attacking the instigators of the agitation against the Portsmouth treaty as friends of the Zionists, Saleh Jabr ended: "It is too late; the opportunity has been lost."

13. After speeches by Deputies Abdul Majid Abbas (Muntaqi), Abdul Razzaq Hamud (Basra) who bitterly attacked His Majesty's Government as the cause of all the ills which had befallen the Arabs, Mohammad Ridha al Shabibi (Bagdad) and the leader of the Istiqlal Party, Mohammed Mahdi Jubba (Bagdad), who spoke of British pressure as responsible for the acceptance of the first truce, the President of the Senate, Nuri as Said, spoke of the evil effects of passion on Arab foreign policy. The "demon of passion" must be driven out of the hearts of statesmen and Parliaments: policy, as King Feisal I. knew, was a matter of thought. India and Pakistan had suffered from imperialism far longer than Iraq had; yet Nehru, who had spent much of his life in British jails, had attended the meeting of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers and so shown his political wisdom. Thus Zionism could not be defeated by force alone, for it had the support

of the United Nations and the Great Powers: but no force in the world could make the Arabs co-operate with the Zionists, and "Israel" could not exist without economic co-operation from the Arabs. "Israel" could be defeated in the end by an economic blockade, and this was the only realistic plan. It was no use blaming other Arab States for failing to do what was not in their power. At this point Nuri Pasha defended the Arab Legion and recalled its victories at the beginning of the war in Palestine. He concluded by referring to last spring's demonstrations and warning his hearers against communism and the fate of Albania, Roumania and Czechoslovakia.

14. A number of Opposition Deputies then spoke of familiar lines, and the session was adjourned until 28th November. At this second meeting a few Deputies made inconclusive speeches, the Prime Minister refused to answer questions on the resumption of fighting or the withdrawal of the Iraqi army from Palestine, and a proposal to submit a resolution at the end of the meeting was accepted.

15. Senator Nuri as Said, speaking for the second time, wound up the debate. He said that the Iraqi army entered Palestine with no definite plans and had gradually been forced on to the defensive. After defending the abandonment of Lydda and Ramleh, he accused the Arab States of having no clear policy. In 1939 the Arabs had rejected the White Paper: now Faris

el Khouri had submitted to the United Nations a plan for a unitary State which was essentially the same as the plan which you proposed, and the Arabs rejected, in 1947.

16. Finally, the following resolution was passed unanimously:—

- (1) There should be drawn up for the defence of Palestine an Arab military plan which should clearly specify the responsibilities and objects of each of the Arab armies.
- (2) There should be drawn up a unified Arab policy, fully supported by responsible Arab statesmen, which should demonstrate clearly and frankly what positive measures should be undertaken to defeat any attempt to create a Jewish State in Palestine, including resistance to any decision taken by the United Nations to establish a Jewish State.
- (3) The plans referred to in paragraphs (1) and (2) above should aim at urgent action by all means, military or political, to clear Palestine of Jewish bands, and especially the whole of the city of Jerusalem, in view of its military, political and religious importance.

I am sending a copy of this despatch to the British Middle East Office, Cairo.

I have, &c.  
HENRY B. MACK.

E 15920/4/G

No. 31

#### CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR

##### Future Policy in Palestine and the Middle East

Mr. Berlin to Sir O. Franks (Washington)

(No. 1785)

Foreign Office,  
Sir,  
14th December, 1948.

I asked the American Ambassador to come and see me to-day to discuss Palestine.

2. I said that now that the Assembly was over, particularly as it had failed to rise to its responsibilities over Palestine, it was more than ever desirable that we and the Americans should lift the Palestine problem out of the sphere of sterile and partisan political debate and approach it from a wider point of view, taking into account

the general state of the world and the broad strategic picture. Communist progress in the Far East was a lesson and a warning. The Americans and ourselves could ill afford to allow the Middle East to go the same way. We must be sure that we were able to defend the Middle East and must take full account of our common strategic interests and of those of the Middle East countries themselves.

3. We had made great efforts during the past year to reach agreement with the United States over Palestine. We had, I

hoped, succeeded in averting a major collision between us, which might well have occurred. I did not wish to embark on reproaches, but we had naturally been deeply disappointed that the United States Government had felt unable to maintain the common line we had at one time agreed upon. None the less we had narrowed the field of differences, and it seemed to us that we were now not far apart. We ought to take advantage of the opportunity now offered by events to work still more actively and closely together for an early solution.

4. It seemed to us most important that the Three-Power Commission should get to work at once. We welcomed the composition of the commission, namely, the United States, France and Turkey. But much would depend on the calibre and standing of the representatives appointed. We hoped that the United States Government would make an early choice of an impartial man of the requisite stature. Their example would no doubt greatly influence the choice of France and Turkey. The members of the commission ought to be big men.

5. I then suggested that it was important that the Americans and ourselves should reach some understanding as to the lines on which the commission would work, and in particular of the territorial settlement it would try to bring about in the Negeb. Transjordan would certainly turn to us for advice and assistance in any negotiations which might be undertaken, and if we and the Americans were working for different objectives the possibility of fresh and alarming divergences would open before us.

6. I explained that our interest in the problem of the Negeb was mainly strategic. We had no reason to think that there was oil in the area. On strategic grounds we regarded it as essential that communications between Egypt and Transjordan west of the Dead Sea should be in friendly hands so that British and Allied forces could use them in an emergency. It was only if these communications were available that the defence in depth of the Canal area could be organised. We could not at present rely on the Jews to make these communications available in time of need, and in any case it would be most imprudent that these communications should be left partly in Arab and partly in Jewish hands. In our view the greatest possible extent of territory should be allotted to Transjordan. I reminded Mr. Douglas that during the discussions in the Assembly the Americans

and ourselves had both favoured the absorption of the Arab portions of Palestine in neighbouring Arab States.

7. The vital communications were the roads from Rafah - Gaza - Beersheba - Hebron - Bethlehem - Jericho and from Auja - Asluj - Beersheba - Hebron - Bethlehem - Jericho.

8. We hoped that we might reach agreement with the Americans in the light of these strategic considerations, which were of equal concern to both of us, that the southern frontier of the Jewish State should be drawn north and west of the Gaza-Beersheba-Hebron road and that the United States representative on the commission should be prepared to work for this. The division of the area left to the Arabs south of this frontier might be made by discussion with Egypt and Transjordan, preferably leaving Transjordan a corridor to the sea. Such discussion between Egypt and Transjordan might either be held through the Conciliation Commission or separately, but the most important matter for the Conciliation Commission was the fixing of the boundaries of Israel.

9. I went on to say that I was considering the extension to Tel Aviv of the work of His Majesty's Consul-General at Haifa, who was now on his way back to his post. I was also considering the early release of the Jews (about 11,000) still in detention in Cyprus, and their admission to Israel. At the same time the recent debate in the House of Commons had shown that there was strong feeling that His Majesty's Government ought to support King Abdullah. With this object the British Chiefs of Staff were pressing strongly for His Majesty's Government to agree to take in the immediate future the measures which we had discussed with Mr. Marshall some weeks ago to reinforce Transjordan by means of the despatch of British reinforcements and war material to the British airfield at Amman, and the despatch of a British unit to Aqaba. My thought was that all these measures should be more or less synchronised in order to preserve a proper balance.

10. I told Mr. Douglas that I understood he was returning to the United States on or soon after 20th December, and that I should like him to inform Mr. Marshall and the President of our views, and to convey a special appeal to Mr. Truman that we should work together with the aims and on the lines I had outlined.

11. I arranged with Mr. Douglas that he should receive an appreciation from the Chiefs of Staff of the strategic issues involved, and should discuss them with the Minister of Defence, the Chiefs of Staff and myself on 20th December.

E 16219/11946/31

No. 32

**CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE SWISS MINISTER**

**His Majesty's Government's Attitude regarding Recognition of Israel**

*Mr. Bevin to Mr. Snow (Berne)*

(No. 242) *Foreign Office,*  
Sir, 22nd December, 1948.

When the Swiss Minister called on me this afternoon, he said that the Swiss Government were anxious to know if His Majesty's Government had modified their attitude towards the question of the recognition of Israel. He said they had received information that we were intending to appoint a consul to Tel Aviv. They had withdrawn their own consul from Palestine and they desired to know our decision.

I am, &c.  
ERNEST BEVIN.

12. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Paris, Cairo, Angora, Amman, Bagdad, Beirut, Damascus and Jeddah and to the Head of the B.M.E.O., Cairo.

I am, &c.  
ERNEST BEVIN.

**CHAPTER II.—TRANSJORDAN**

E 944/944/25

No. 33

**THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN TRANSJORDAN AND SAUDI ARABIA**

The boundary between Saudi Arabia and Transjordan has never been precisely agreed on by the parties concerned. Although this uncertainty applies to the whole frontier, the nature and importance of the points at issue vary from one sector to another.

**I.—The Points at Issue**

The points at issue can most conveniently be considered under three separate headings:—

- (a) The junction of the boundaries of Iraq, Transjordan and Saudi Arabia at Jebel Aneiza, together with the Saudi Arabian claim to a corridor linking their country with Syria;
- (b) The Nejd-Transjordan frontier from Jebel Aneiza to Mudauwara;
- (c) The Hejaz-Transjordan frontier from Mudauwara to Akaba.

**(a) Jebel Aneiza and the corridor to Syria**

As will be seen from the rough sketch (No. 1) attached to this memorandum, the northern boundary of Saudi Arabia is separated from Syria by the adjacent countries of Transjordan and Iraq, whose common frontier runs north-north-west from Jebel Aneiza for approximately one hundred miles to Jebel et Tenf, where the boundaries of Transjordan, Iraq, and Syria meet at a point agreed by these three countries in 1932 and delimited in 1933. No such agreement exists, however, about the point where the boundaries of Iraq, Transjordan, and Saudi Arabia meet. This point was supposed to have been fixed by Article I of the Hadda Agreement<sup>(1)</sup> of 1925, but the terms of this article were ambiguous and the maps then available inaccurate, so that this article can be variously interpreted as fixing the angle formed by the northern boundary of Saudi Arabia and the eastern boundary of Transjordan either at a point on the top of Jebel Aneiza or else at the intersection of two geographical coordinates some fifteen miles to the south-

west. The angle formed by the western boundary of Iraq and the northern boundary of Saudi Arabia has, however, not merely been agreed but also fixed and marked on the ground at the top of Jebel Aneiza.

The Saudi Arabian Government have taken advantage of the ambiguity of the Hadda Agreement to support their claim to a corridor connecting Saudi Arabia with Syria and would presumably contend that the point marked "A" on the rough sketch (No. 2) attached to this memorandum defines the eastern end of the Transjordan boundary and the point marked "B" the western end of the Iraq boundary, while the intervening gap constitutes the southern end of their corridor to Syria. This corridor could, in any case, be no more than a wedge, since it would necessarily be closed at the northern end by the tri-junction of the Syrian, Iraqi and Transjordan boundaries at Jebel et Tenf, though the Saudi Arabian Government might conceivably decline to recognise this agreement, to which they were not a party. Their claim has not so far been stated in precise detail, but it appears that they might now be content with the creation of a "neutral zone"<sup>(2)</sup> rather than a specifically Saudi corridor. This claim has never been admitted either by the Government of Transjordan or by His Majesty's Government while they held the mandate for that country. When raised in 1925 by the Saudi Arabian Government, this claim was rejected by His Majesty's Government and, in its stead, article 13 of the Hadda Agreement conceded a right of free transit across Transjordan territory to Syrian and Saudi Arabian merchants. This agreement ceased to be valid (under the provisions of article 14) when His Majesty's Government surrendered their mandate for Transjordan, but the Government of Transjordan agreed<sup>(3)</sup> to regard it as remaining in force if the Government of Saudi Arabia were willing to make a similar declaration. The Government of Saudi Arabia have so far avoided committing themselves on this

<sup>(1)</sup> E 5085/46/31, June 1946.  
<sup>(2)</sup> Command 6799 of 1946.

point, but would in any case interpret the agreement differently. The Government of Iraq, who would naturally have to be consulted about any frontier modifications in this area, would certainly support King Abdullah in resisting any proposal likely to prejudice their common frontier with Transjordan.

The Hadda Agreement and its conflicting interpretations are dealt with in considerable detail in a Foreign Office memorandum No. E 4690/277/25 of 1939.

(b) *The Nejd-Transjordan boundary from Jebel Aneiza to Mudauwara*

The uncertainty attached to this boundary again derives from the ambiguity of the Hadda Agreement, whose provisions can be variously interpreted to give two and, in one sector, three possible lines, separated from one another by distances varying from five to twenty miles. This confusion is still worse confounded, along certain stretches of the boundary, where armoured car patrols of the Royal Air Force and Transjordan Frontier Force had, by long usage, extended the *de facto* limits of Transjordan territory beyond those of any interpretation of the Hadda Agreement.

The frontier area, being desert sparsely populated by nomads, is not important in itself and the substance of the dispute concerns the possession of certain wells, car-tracks and strategic features. A detailed account of this question will again be found in Foreign Office memorandum No. E 4690/277/25 of 1939.

(c) *The Hejaz-Transjordan boundary from Mudauwara to Akaba*

This is the most serious but the least complicated of the three frontier disputes. King Ibn Saud, like his predecessor King Hussein of the Hejaz, has always declined to recognise the validity of this boundary, unilaterally decided by His Majesty's Government as a straight line drawn from Mudauwara to Akaba, and claims that the Maan-Akaba area should form part of Saudi Arabia. The Government of Saudi Arabia have never precisely defined the territory claimed by them, but this may be assumed to comprise the whole of the original Ottoman Sanjak of Maan, which extends northwards from the line Mudauwara-Akaba for some 150 miles to the Wadi El Mojob, as indicated on the rough sketch (No. 1) attached to this memorandum. Though mainly too arid to

be of much value, this area contains roughly a fifth of Transjordan's cultivated lands, a petroleum deposit of poor quality and unknown extent, the Palestine Potash Works at the southern end of the Dead Sea and Transjordan's only port of Akaba. The Saudi claim, inherited from the King of the Hejaz, so they contend, by right of conquest, has never been admitted either by His Majesty's Government or the Government of Transjordan.

## II.—Previous Negotiations

All the Saudi Arabian claims have been the subject of intermittent and inconclusive negotiations with His Majesty's Government and the Government of Transjordan.

(a) *The Corridor to Syria*

This claim was not raised during the negotiations of 1934-39 about the Transjordan-Nejd frontier, but in January 1946, after Transjordan had gained complete independence, King Ibn Saud addressed a memorandum<sup>(4)</sup> on this subject to His Majesty's Government. In this memorandum the King pointed out that the Hadda Agreement had lapsed on the termination of His Majesty's Government's mandate for Transjordan and asked that the Saudi Arabian claims for frontier revision should be taken into account by His Majesty's Government in preparing their proposed Treaty of Alliance with Transjordan. This memorandum included a claim for a "connexion with Syria."

After the signature of the Treaty of Alliance between His Majesty's Government and Transjordan (whose only reference to the frontier question was a declaration by the Transjordan Government of their willingness to regard the Hadda Agreement as remaining in force), King Ibn Saud wrote a further letter,<sup>(5)</sup> reiterating his claim and suggesting that, if he had to negotiate with the Government of Transjordan rather than with His Majesty's Government, then "the presence of a third party between us" would be preferable.

In a note<sup>(6)</sup> dated 24th May, 1946, King Ibn Saud made quite clear his own conviction that His Majesty's Government should themselves have negotiated a new frontier settlement with him before giving

<sup>(4)</sup> E 874/46/31.

<sup>(5)</sup> E 4168/45/25.

<sup>(6)</sup> E 5085/46/31.

up the mandate and concluding a treaty with Transjordan. In view of His Majesty's Government's refusal to do this, King Ibn Saud hoped that they would at least act as an intermediary in his negotiations with the Government of Transjordan. In this note, King Ibn Saud repudiated any desire to deprive Iraq and Transjordan of the benefits of their common frontier and suggested that each party should exercise sovereignty over its own subjects while they were present in the "passage" between Saudi Arabia and Syria. He did not enlarge on this proposal, which would seem to imply the creation of some sort of neutral zone. In their reply His Majesty's Government agreed to act as an intermediary until such time as normal diplomatic relations had been established between the two countries, but made no comment on the merits of the case. The Government of Transjordan, to whom His Majesty's Government communicated the views of the Saudi Arabian Government, merely replied that they considered the frontier question as already settled and requiring no further discussion.<sup>(7)</sup>

In October 1946, however, a meeting took place between the Prime Minister of Transjordan and the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, at which it was agreed in principle that they should discuss the question of the frontier at some future date. Inconclusive and sporadic discussions did in fact take place, but no progress was made towards any agreement.

(b) *Transjordan-Nejd boundary*

After a series of discussions between His Majesty's Government and the Saudi Arabian Government, which lasted from 1933 to 1938 and which are dealt with in detail in Foreign Office printed memorandum No. E 4690/277/25 of 1939, it was agreed in principle that a joint survey party should prepare a correct map of the frontier area as a preliminary to negotiations on the delimitation of the boundary laid down in the Hadda Agreement. Owing to the outbreak of war in 1939, His Majesty's Government were unable to carry out this agreement, since when this question has remained in abeyance, although it has naturally been coupled with the Saudi claim for a corridor to Syria, whose recent history is related above.

<sup>(7)</sup> E 7354/45/25.

(c) *Hejaz-Transjordan boundary*

The Saudi Arabian claim to Akaba and Maan, whose origins and history are the subject of the Foreign Office printed memorandum No. E 3/3/25 of January 1940 remained in abeyance so long as His Majesty's Government held the mandate for Transjordan, though King Ibn Saud explicitly reserved the right to raise it again. This he did in his memorandum<sup>(8)</sup> of January 1946 where he asked that the towns of Akaba and Maan should be annexed to the Hejaz. Subsequent negotiations followed the same course and had the same inconclusive results as those mentioned in II (a) above.

It should, however, be noted that in September 1946 Mr. Graffey Smith, then His Majesty's Minister in Jeddah, thought that King Ibn Saud might be persuaded to suspend this claim, provided that the Government of Transjordan conceded some form of neutral zone or jointly administered corridor between Saudi Arabia and Syria.

## III.—The Implication and Interests of His Majesty's Government

His Majesty's Government are involved in all three frontier disputes, since all three have been the subject of negotiation between His Majesty's Government and the Government of Saudi Arabia. The Government of Transjordan, in particular, will undoubtedly quote previous statements of His Majesty's Government's attitude towards the Saudi Arabian claims in support of their case, while the Saudi Arabian Government, even if they find such statements generally unhelpful, will probably wish to invoke His Majesty's Government's promise to act as the channel of communication in negotiating an agreement. It will, therefore, be impossible for His Majesty's Government entirely to disinterest themselves in such negotiations, even if the Government of Transjordan did not request their assistance and support under article I of the Treaty of Alliance, in which His Majesty's Government undertook "not to adopt in foreign countries an attitude which is inconsistent with the alliance or might create difficulties for the other party thereto." This would not legally bind His Majesty's Government to support the Government of Transjordan in opposing all the Saudi claims, even though His Majesty's Government themselves re-

<sup>(8)</sup> E 874/46/31.

jected these claims while responsible for Transjordan, but His Majesty's Government might well find some difficulty in convincing King Abdullah of their right to remain neutral in this dispute.

British interests are not, however, directly affected by the Saudi claims on the Nejd-Transjordan frontier. The establishment of a jointly administered corridor to Syria might entail the conclusion of a supplementary agreement for the protection of the Kirkuk-Haifa pipeline, which passes through this area, but this should present no difficulty. The Saudi claim to Akaba, on the other hand, is a matter of some concern to His Majesty's Government. Unless and until a stable Government, in friendly relations with both His Majesty's Govern-

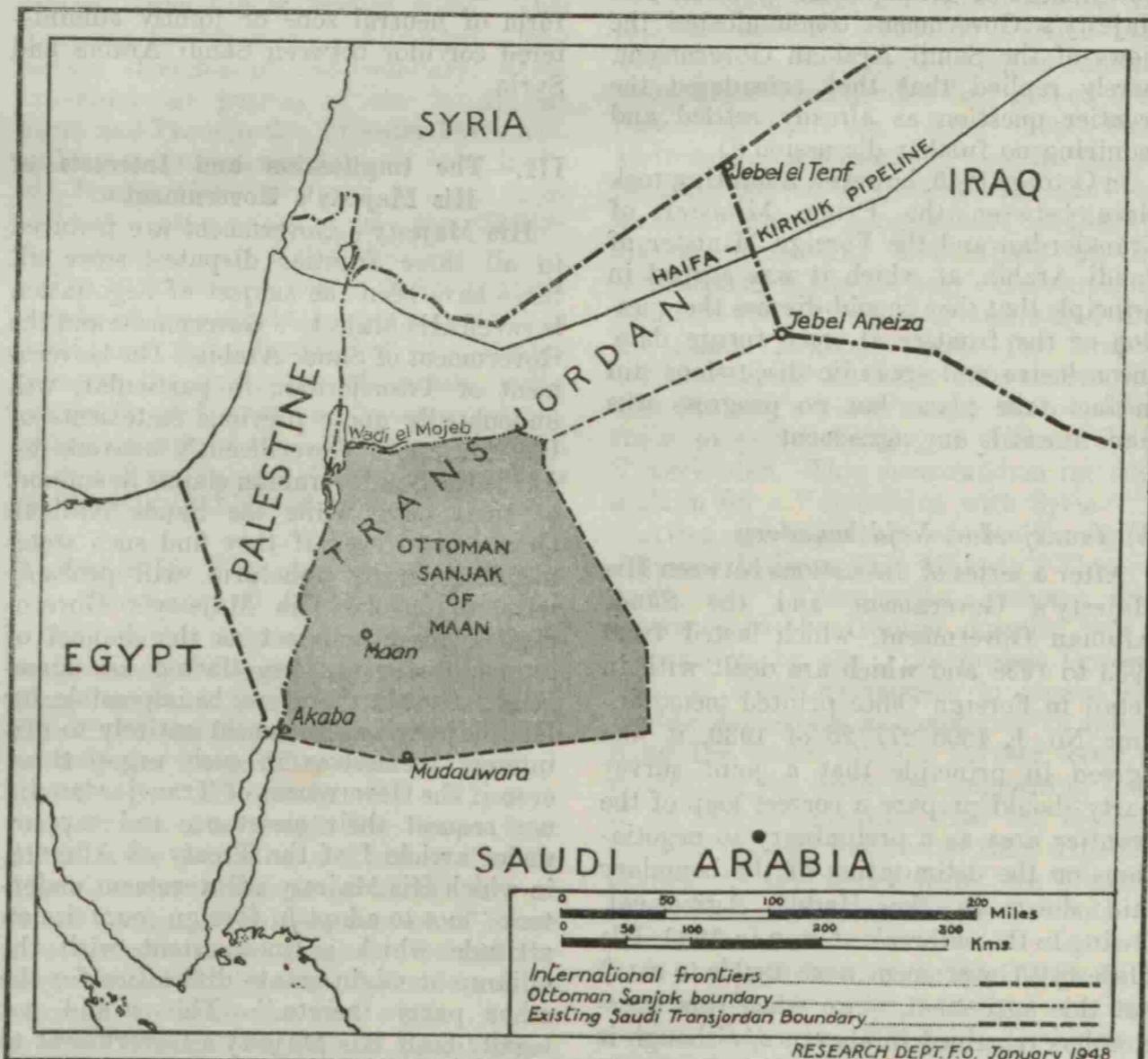
ment and the Government of Transjordan, is established in Palestine, Akaba will be the only port through which arms and equipment or, in case of need, British forces, could be sent to Transjordan. The retention of this port by Transjordan is, therefore, essential to the discharge of His Majesty's obligations under their Treaty of Alliance with Transjordan. It is, moreover, not impossible that future developments in Palestine may render Haifa unsuitable as a terminal for the oil pipelines, which might then have to be diverted to Akaba.

J. E. CABLE.

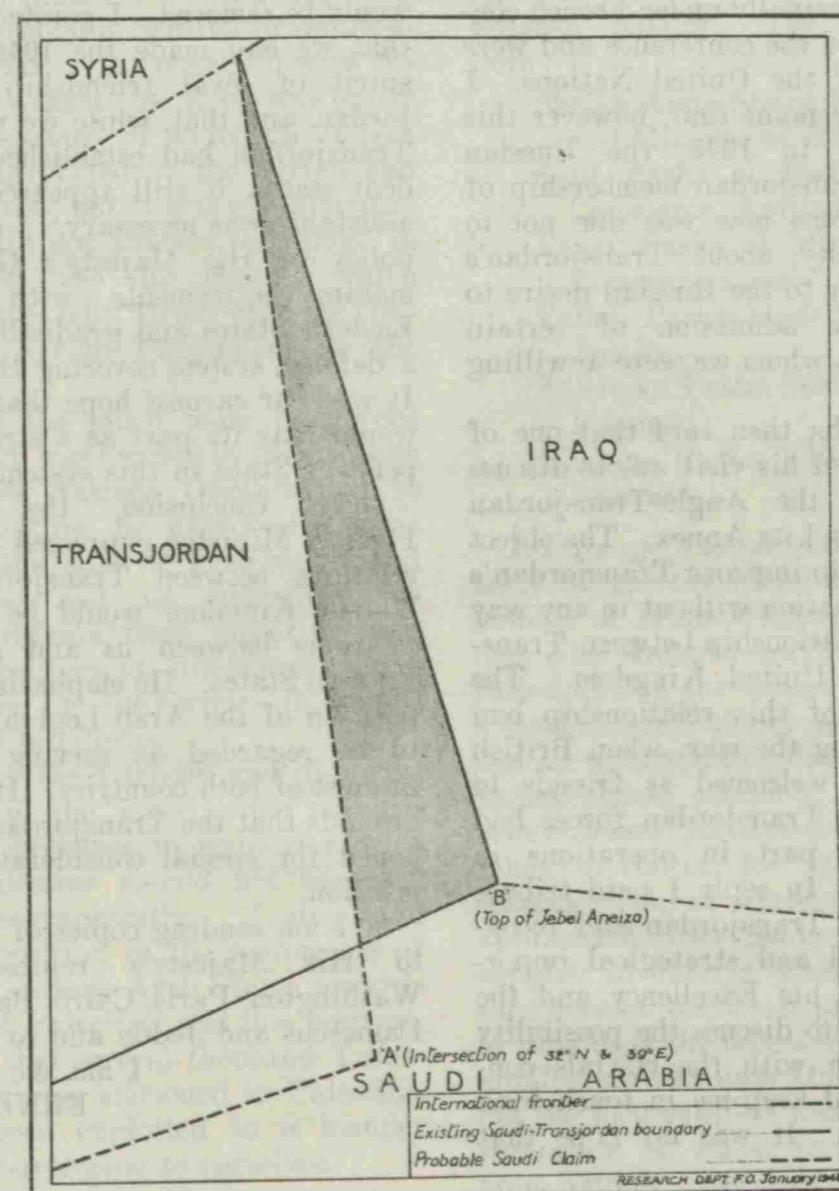
Foreign Office,

22nd January, 1948.

(No. 1)



(No. 2)



E 1340/14/80

### CONVERSATION WITH THE TRANSJORDAN PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER

#### Anglo-Transjordan Relations

Mr. Bevin to Sir A. Kirkbride (Amman)

(No. 11)

Foreign Office,  
Sir,

29th January, 1948

The Transjordan Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, accompanied by the Transjordan Minister in London, paid their first visit to me on 26th January.

2. The Prime Minister began by conveying to me the greetings of King Abdullah, which I warmly reciprocated. He went on to emphasise the genuine friendship of Transjordan for the United Kingdom. He said that Transjordan was

most anxious that this friendship should be maintained and reaffirmed, but that it was extremely important for the Transjordan Government to be able to show that they were not on an inferior footing as compared with neighbouring countries. He referred to the fact that Transjordan, owing, he alleged, to opposition on our part, had not been able to attend the San Francisco Conference in 1945, and had consequently not automatically become a member of the United Nations. Syria and

Lebanon, on the other hand, which were at that time still nominally under French control, had attended the conference and were now members of the United Nations. I remarked on this point that, however this may have been in 1945, the Russian opposition to Transjordan membership of the United Nations now was due not to any real difficulty about Transjordan's status, but simply to the Russian desire to bargain for the admission of certain Russian satellites whom we were unwilling to elect.

3. Tawfiq Pasha then said that one of the main objects of his visit was to discuss the revision of the Anglo-Transjordan Treaty of 1946, and its Annex. The object of this would be to improve Transjordan's international situation without in any way impairing the relationship between Transjordan and the United Kingdom. The intimate nature of this relationship had been shown during the war, when British forces had been welcomed as friends in Transjordan and Transjordan forces had taken an active part in operations in various theatres. In reply I paid tribute to the loyalty of Transjordan and recognised its political and strategical importance. I invited his Excellency and the Foreign Minister to discuss the possibility of treaty revision with the officials concerned, who would keep me in touch with the conversations. It was my hope that

any misunderstandings and difficulties would be removed. I pointed out, however, that we had made the 1946 Treaty in a spirit of loyal friendship with Transjordan, and that, while we were glad that Transjordan had established its independent status, it still appeared that certain assistance was necessary. I referred to the policy of His Majesty's Government of making agreements with all Middle Eastern States and gradually building up a defence system covering the whole area. It was our earnest hope that Transjordan would play its part as a strong and independent State in this system.

4. In conclusion, the Transjordan Foreign Minister expressed the hope that relations between Transjordan and the United Kingdom would be a model for relations between us and other Middle Eastern States. He emphasised the special position of the Arab Legion, which ought to be regarded as serving the common interest of both countries. It was on these grounds that the Transjordan Government hoped for special consideration for their position.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Washington, Paris, Cairo, Bagdad, Beirut, Damascus and Jeddah and to the B.M.E.O.

I am, &c.  
ERNEST BEVIN.

E 2010/2010/80

No. 35

## TRANSJORDAN: ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1947

Sir A. Kirkbride to Mr. Bevin. (Received 12th February)

(No. 1. Confidential) Amman,  
Sir,  
1st January, 1948

I have the honour to enclose herewith my annual report on Transjordan for the year 1947.

I have, &c.  
A. S. KIRKBRIDE.

Enclosure in No. 35

Annual Report  
General

Although 1947 was marked by the opening of the new Parliament with an Upper and a Lower House, which, in theory, should give the people a greater degree of

control over the actions of the Executive, during that period King Abdullah gradually assumed power to an extent which was hardly consistent with Transjordan's status of a constitutional monarchy. This process was accelerated by the change of Prime Minister in February, as Samir Pasha Rifai was less able than his predecessor to control or check the actions of the monarch. This development led to greater activity and expenditure in the sphere of foreign affairs to the detriment of the internal administration of the country.

The first year of the independence of Transjordan was one of extreme difficulty both as regards political events and economic conditions.

On the political side it was the King's experience and influence which guided this young State through difficulties of unprecedented complexity. In connexion with the Greater Syria scheme, the King was guilty of some effervescence, of which the importance was exaggerated by the Syrian and Saudi authorities, but it was of particular note that he did not attempt to exploit, in that connexion, the disturbances which took place in the Jebel Druze over the elections to the Syrian Parliament in the autumn.

As regards the much more dangerous situation which was created by the decision of the United Nations Organisation to partition Palestine, he exercised all his influence on the side of moderation and common sense and he compelled his Ministers to refrain from repeating here any of the belligerent utterances which were made by the authorities in neighbouring Arab territories.

The value of the friendly and co-operative attitude of the Transjordan authorities towards ourselves in connexion with events in Palestine should not be overlooked. Geographically, Transjordan holds a key position in the movements of troops of the various Arab States towards the frontier of Palestine, and this position, and the fact that several thousand Transjordan troops were stationed in Palestine, could have been exploited in a manner extremely embarrassing to ourselves.

## Internal Affairs

2. On 4th February, 1947, Ibrahim Pasha Hashim and his colleagues resigned from office and were replaced by the following gentlemen:—

Samir Pasha Rifai: Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Abbas Pasha Mirza: Minister of Interior.

Suleiman Bey Nabulsi: Minister of Finance.

Bishara Bey Ghassib: Minister of Justice.

Sheikh Amin Shanqiti: Qadi Qudhat and Minister of Education.

Omar Bey Matar: Minister of Communications and Commerce.

This Administration survived until 27th December, 1947, when Samir Pasha Rifai resigned on grounds of health and because the Council of Ministers needed strengthening in existing circumstances.

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He was succeeded by Tewfiq Pasha Abul Huda as Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs. The other Ministers were:—

Sheikh Amin Shanqiti: Qadi Qudhat and Minister of Education.

Said Pasha el Mufti: Minister of Commerce, Agriculture and Supply.

Fauzi Pasha el Mulki: Minister of Communications.

Fallah Pasha Madadha: Minister of Justice.

Suleiman Pasha Sukkar: Minister of Finance.

Hashim Pasha Kheir: Minister of Interior.

Advantage was taken of a recent amendment of the Constitution to increase the number of Ministers from six to seven.

3. The drought conditions which prevailed during the winter of 1946-47, with a total rainfall 50 per cent. below average and an unfavourable distribution, resulted in an almost complete crop failure and severe losses in live-stock. Steps were taken to collect, for reissue as seed, all surplus stocks of wheat and barley and an application was made to I.E.F.C. for supplies of foreign wheat. Owing to the slackness of the Transjordan Government in providing the necessary particulars, this application was unproductive during 1947, but the food supplies were eking out by consignments of wheat and barley obtained from Turkey, rice from Egypt and Brazil, dates from Iraq and some flour from Canada.

The Transjordan Government arranged for about £P.250,000 to be issued in loans to cultivators, but, because the fantastically high prices to which grain had been forced (£P.95 a ton for wheat), this sum could not satisfy more than a fraction of the needs of the population.

The general rises in prices of food-stuff and the inability of the Transjordan Government to increase the high cost of living allowance to civil servants led to an unusual amount of corruption amongst the more lowly paid officials.

Some public works were undertaken in the south of Transjordan as relief measures.

4. Part of the Ajlun district was infested with desert locusts during the early spring, but the measures taken to control this pest were entirely successful and no damage to crops occurred from that source.

5. Two new concessions were granted by the Transjordan Government during the year; one to a subsidiary of the Iraq Petroleum Company to explore for and mine mineral oil, and the second to the Transjordan Electric Power Company for the sale of electric energy in the municipal area of Amman. Preliminary exploration for oil started but no drilling was undertaken.

6. The first single-stage elections to be held in Transjordan took place in October with only one untoward incident, when an unsuccessful candidate at Kerak assaulted a police officer. About 70 per cent. of the electorate cast their votes and the persons returned were all native-born Transjordanians. In the past elections in Transjordan have been contests between independent individual, but this year, for the first time, some candidates came forward on a party basis and these were, in general, successful against their independent opponents. The party, "Hizb el Nahda," was organised with support from the Palace.

The first Parliament was opened in state on 1st November, 1947, since when the younger and better-educated members of the Council of Representatives have given the Council of Ministers an uncomfortable time by a series of interpellations on the activities of the Administration. This aspect of parliamentary life was not present at the meetings of the earlier legislatures.

7. Detachments of British troops were stationed in Transjordan for training purposes during the greater part of the year under review.

The military units of the Arab Legion continued to be employed in Palestine under the orders of the General Officer Commanding British Forces.

#### Foreign Affairs

8. King Abdullah paid a state visit to Turkey in January, accompanied by his Minister for Foreign Affairs. A treaty of amity between Transjordan and Turkey was signed at Angora during this visit, and subsequently ratified at Amman. The purpose of this treaty, as far as the King was concerned, was to strengthen his position *vis-à-vis* his Saudi and Syrian opponents. Its conclusion was most unpopular with the Syrian Government.

A treaty of friendship and alliance between Transjordan and Iraq was signed

at Bagdad in March and ratified at Amman later. This treaty did not do much to achieve the close union between the two Hashimite States which was the aim of King Abdullah, and little had been done by the end of the year to give effect to its operative clauses. There was some talk at the end of the year of giving reconsideration to the original proposals for some form of federation between the two countries.

9. Ministers, resident at Amman, were appointed by the Turkish and Iraqi Governments, the Spanish Government opened a legation with a chargé d'affaires and the Egyptian Minister in Iraq was accredited to Transjordan and will spend half his time here; the Afghan Minister in Iraq was accredited to Transjordan also, his place of residence, however, continuing to be Bagdad.

Syria and Saudi Arabia remained without diplomatic relations with Transjordan, but both countries checked their earlier attempts to conduct all their business with Transjordan through British channels, as though the mandate still existed.

King Abdullah sent official goodwill missions to Greece and to Tunis, and a Transjordan Legation was established at Angora.

A provisional trade agreement was concluded by an exchange of letters between the Transjordan and Egyptian Governments.

10. There were two periods of activity by the King in pursuance of his ambitions for the formation of a Greater Syria, the first in the spring, and the second in the summer. Considerable ill-feeling between Transjordan and Syria was engendered as a result and the Transjordan consulate at Damascus was withdrawn in March.

One demi-official white paper on Greater Syria appeared in Transjordan to be followed by two sequels published, the first in Damascus and the second in Transjordan, by obscure non-official bodies.

The second phase was assumed by the Syrian authorities to be a preliminary to direct action by Transjordan and Syrian appeals for support produced lively reactions in Saudi Arabia, the Lebanon and Egypt. It did not appear, however, that direct action had been contemplated and no attempt was made by the King to exploit in this connexion the quarrel which developed later in the year between the Atrash family in the Jebel Druze and the Syrian Government and which resulted in a certain amount of fighting in Syrian

territory adjacent to the Transjordan frontier.

11. Developments regarding Palestine after the visit of U.N.S.C.O.P. to the Middle East then ousted the Greater Syrian scheme from its position of priority. It was evident at an early stage that King Abdullah did not agree with the extreme measures advocated by the other State members of the Arab League and considerable trouble was taken by those members to commit Transjordan to taking concerted action, or, at least, to abstain from taking unilateral action. Thanks mainly to the King, Transjordan ended the year reasonably clear of entanglements in this connexion. Some embarrassment was, however, caused by the King's incurable habit of granting interviews to press correspondents.

There were strikes and demonstrations throughout Transjordan when the decision of the United Nations Organisation to partition Palestine became known. Incidents of violence occurred at Es Salt and Amman directed mainly against American interests. There was little sign of feeling against Great Britain.

Recruiting offices were opened by a self-appointed committee of the "Akhwan el Muslimeen" at Amman and subscriptions invited. It was not, however, clear what force the recruits would serve in and for what purpose the funds would be expended.

There was a significant rise in prices of arms and ammunition and a British service rifle in good condition was worth about £P.100.

At the end of the year no organised body of volunteers had emerged, but it was known that a number of armed individuals had crossed the Jordan fords into Palestine.

12. The continued failure of Transjordan to secure admission to United Nations Organisation and the attacks made by Russia and by other Arab States on the King in connexion with the Anglo-Transjordan Treaty of Alliance and its annex gave birth to a desire for revision of the text of that document. This wish for revision does not arise from any intention to limit the rights and privileges of Great Britain in Transjordan or from dissatisfaction with the working of the treaty, but is created solely by anxiety to remove any outward sign of inferiority of status.

13. No progress was made in connexion with settling the differences of opinion on the subject of the frontier between Saudi Arabia and Transjordan. On the frontier itself there were no incidents of importance and some complaints of Saudi origin of minor territorial trespasses by Transjordan or British personnel were proved to be unfounded.

Nothing was done by the Transjordan authorities to lessen the travel privileges which had been enjoyed by Saudi subjects when Transjordan was under a mandate in particular, their freedom of transit across Transjordan territory to Syria was unimpeded.

It may be that, in these circumstances, the Saudi claims will be allowed to rest.

E 3673/14/80

No. 36

#### ANGLO-TRANSJORDAN TREATY OF ALLIANCE

*Sir A. Kirkbride to Mr. Bevin. (Received 19th March)*

(No. 16. Secret) Amman,  
Sir, 15th March, 1948.

I have the honour to refer to my telegram No. 158 of 15th March, 1948, about the revision of the Anglo-Transjordan Treaty of Alliance.

2. The new treaty and annex were signed in quadruplicate and, following the precedent of the treaty of 1946, each completed copy consists of the English and Arabic texts bound together. In two copies the English text comes first and in the other two copies the Arabic text takes precedence.

3. I enclose herewith a complete copy of the treaty and annex together with the original letters in Arabic from the Prime Minister of Transjordan and certified copies of the letters in English which I addressed to the Prime Minister.

The other original copies of the treaty and annex are being retained for the time being by the Prime Minister and by myself respectively. I assume that you will wish me to transmit my second copy to you as soon as I know that the enclosures to this despatch have reached you safely.

4. The only explanatory comment needed on these papers is in connexion with the published letter on the subsidy. Prior to the receipt of your telegram No. 154 of 10th March, 1948, this letter had already been accepted in a final form which did not differ in effect, although the wording was not identical, with that indicated by you. As the Prime Minister was inclined to be restive about going back on any text already accepted, I decided to let our draft stand.

5. As was anticipated, the Transjordan political refugees resident in Damascus and, in all probability certain of the Syrian authorities themselves, exerted considerable effort to organise opposition in Transjordan to the conclusion of a new treaty. It is not necessary for me to comment here on the reasons why the conclusion of a new treaty was unpopular in certain political circles outside Transjordan, they are already known to you.

The results of these efforts were unimportant. A number of telegrams of protest came from disgruntled notables and from students of the Ajlun district, the part of Transjordan nearest to Damascus and, therefore, most easily influenced. The students of the secondary school at Irbid decided to strike on 7th March in protest, but were induced to abandon the idea.

Certain members of the late Council of Ministers also showed signs of trying to make trouble for their successors in this connexion, but they were disposed of by King Abdullah, who pointed out that they had been perfectly willing, and even anxious, whilst they were in office, to do what had been accomplished by the present Council.

6. It was interesting to note that the Prime Minister's personal reputation was too high for an accusation that he had agreed to anything contrary to the best interests of the country to be taken seriously. The opposition that appeared took the form of protests against the fact that the new text was not to be published before signature.

Both King Abdullah and the Prime Minister took a very firm line with the would-be trouble makers, and the fact that hostile outside influences had such little effect on the people of the country is something in the nature of a triumph for them both.

They both stressed the point in public that it was Transjordan which was

pressing for the revision and not Great Britain.

I have, &c.  
A. S. KIRKBRIDE.

Enclosure 1 in No. 36

*Treaty of Alliance between His Majesty in respect of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan*

Amman, 15th March, 1948.

His Majesty The King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas and His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan;

Animated by the most sincere desire to consolidate the friendship and good relations which exist between them and to establish these relations on the foundations best calculated to ensure the development of this friendship;

Desiring to conclude a new Treaty of Alliance with these objects and in order to strengthen by co-operation and mutual assistance the contribution which each of them will be able to make to the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the provisions and principles of the Charter of the United Nations :<sup>(1)</sup>

have accordingly appointed as their Plenipotentiaries :

His Majesty The King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas (hereinafter referred to as His Britannic Majesty) :

for the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland :

Sir Alec Seath Kirkbride, C.M.G., O.B.E., M.C., his Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary.

His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan :

His Excellency Tewfiq Pasha Abul Huda, Jewelled Order of the Nahda, First Class Order of the Istiqlal, Prime Minister.

His Excellency Fauzi Pasha el Mulki, Second Class Order of the Istiqlal, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

(1) "Treaty Series No. 67 (1946)," Cmd. 7015.

Who having exhibited their full powers found in good and due form have agreed as follows :—

ARTICLE 1

There shall be perpetual peace and friendship between His Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan.

A close alliance shall continue between the High Contracting Parties in consecration of their friendship, their cordial understanding and their good relations.

Each of the High Contracting Parties undertakes not to adopt in regard to foreign countries an attitude which is inconsistent with the Alliance or might create difficulties for the other party thereto.

ARTICLE 2

Should any dispute between either High Contracting Party and a third State produce a situation which would involve the risk of a rupture with that State, the High Contracting Parties will concert together with a view to the settlement of the said dispute by peaceful means in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and of any other international obligations which may be applicable to the case.

ARTICLE 3

Should either High Contracting Party notwithstanding the provisions of Article 2 become engaged in war, the other High Contracting Party will, subject always to the provisions of Article 4, immediately come to his aid as a measure of collective defence.

In the event of an imminent menace of hostilities the High Contracting Parties will immediately concert together the necessary measures of defence.

ARTICLE 4

Nothing in the present Treaty is intended to, or shall in any way prejudice the rights and obligations which devolve, or may devolve, upon either of the High Contracting Parties under the Charter of the United Nations or under any other existing international agreements, conventions or treaties.

ARTICLE 5

The present Treaty of which the Annex is an integral part shall replace the Treaty of Alliance signed in London on 22nd

March, 1946, of the Christian Era,<sup>(2)</sup> together with its Annex and all Letters and Notes, interpreting or otherwise exchanged in 1946 in connexion therewith, provided however that Article 9 of the said Treaty shall remain in force in accordance with and as modified by the notes exchanged on this day on this subject.

ARTICLE 6

Should any difference arise relative to the application or interpretation of the present Treaty and should the High Contracting Parties fail to settle such difference by direct negotiations, it shall be referred to the International Court of Justice unless the parties agree to another mode of settlement.

ARTICLE 7

The present Treaty shall be ratified and shall come into force upon the exchange of instruments of ratification which shall take place in London as soon as possible. It shall remain in force for a period of twenty years from the date of its coming into force. At any time after fifteen years from the date of the coming into force of the present Treaty, the High Contracting Parties will, at the request of either of them, negotiate a revised Treaty which shall provide for the continued co-operation of the High Contracting Parties in the defence of their common interests. The period of fifteen years shall be reduced if a complete system of security agreements under Article 43 of the Charter of the United Nations is concluded before the expiry of this period. At the end of twenty years, if the present Treaty has not been revised, it shall remain in force until the expiry of one year after notice of termination has been given by either High Contracting Party to the other through the diplomatic channel.

In witness whereof the above-named plenipotentiaries have signed the present Treaty and affixed thereto their seals.

Done in duplicate at Amman, this 15th day of March, 1948, in the English and Arabic languages, both texts being equally authentic.

(L.S.) A. S. KIRKBRIDE.

(L.S.) TEWFIQ ABUL HUDA.

(L.S.) FAUZI EL MULKI.

(2) "Treaty Series No. 82 (1946)," Cmd. 6916.

## ARTICLE 1

(a) The High Contracting Parties recognise that, in the common interests of both, each of them must be in a position to discharge his obligations under Article 3 of the Treaty.

(b) In the event of either High Contracting Party becoming engaged in war, or of a menace of hostilities, each High Contracting Party will invite the other to bring to his territory or territory controlled by him the necessary forces of all arms. Each will furnish to the other all the facilities and assistance in his power, including the use of all means and lines of communication, and on financial terms to be agreed upon.

(c) His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan will safeguard, maintain and develop as necessary the airfields, ports, roads and other means and lines of communication in and across the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan as may be required for the purposes of the present Treaty and its annex and will call upon His Britannic Majesty's assistance as may be required for this purpose.

(d) Until such time as the High Contracting Parties agree that the state of world security renders such measures unnecessary, His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan invites His Britannic Majesty to maintain units of the Royal Air Force at Amman and Mafrak airfields. His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan will provide all the necessary facilities for the accommodation and maintenance of the units mentioned in this paragraph, including facilities for the storage of their ammunition and supplies and the lease of any land required.

## ARTICLE 2

In the common defence interests of the High Contracting Parties a permanent joint advisory body will be set up immediately on the coming into force of the present Treaty to co-ordinate defence matters between the Governments of the High Contracting Parties within the scope of the present Treaty.

This body, which will be known as the Anglo-Transjordan Joint Defence Board, will be composed of competent military representatives of the Governments of the

High Contracting Parties in equal numbers, and its functions will include:—

- (a) The formulation of agreed plans in the strategic interests common to both countries.
- (b) Immediate consultation in the event of any threat of war.
- (c) The co-ordination of measures to enable the forces of either High Contracting Party to fulfil their obligations under Article 3 of the present Treaty and in particular measures for the safeguarding, maintenance and development of the airfields, ports and lines of communication referred to in Article 1 (c) of this Annex.
- (d) Consultation regarding training and the provision of equipment. The Joint Defence Board shall submit annual reports thereon and recommendations to the Governments of the two High Contracting Parties.
- (e) Arrangements regarding the joint training operations referred to in Article 6 of this Annex.
- (f) The consideration of and if necessary recommendation for the location of His Britannic Majesty's forces at places in Transjordan other than those provided for in Article 1 (d) of this Annex.

## ARTICLE 3

His Britannic Majesty will reimburse to His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan all expenditure which the Government of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan may incur in connexion with the provision of facilities under Article 1 (c) and (d) of the present Annex and will repair or pay compensation for any damage due to the actions of members of His Britannic Majesty's armed forces, other than damage caused in military operations undertaken in accordance with Article 3 of the present Treaty.

## ARTICLE 4

His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan agrees to afford on request all necessary facilities for the movement of units of His Britannic Majesty's forces in transit across the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan, with their supplies and equipment, on the same financial terms as those applicable to the forces of His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan.

## ARTICLE 5

Pending the conclusion of an agreement between the High Contracting Parties defining in detail the jurisdictional and fiscal immunities of members of the forces of His Britannic Majesty in the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan, they will continue to enjoy the immunities which are accorded to them at present, including the provision that, in accordance with the established principles of international law governing the immunities of Sovereigns and sovereign States, no demand will be made for the payment of His Britannic Majesty of any Transjordan taxation in respect of immovable property leased or owned by His Britannic Majesty or in respect of his movable property, including customs duty on goods imported or exported by or on behalf of His Britannic Majesty. The privileges and immunities to be extended to the units and personnel of the armed forces of His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan visiting or present in British territory shall be defined in similar agreements on a reciprocal basis.

## ARTICLE 6

In order that the armed forces of the High Contracting Parties should attain the necessary efficiency in co-operation with each other and in view of the desirability of establishing identity between the training and methods employed by the Transjordan and British forces respectively:—

- (1) His Britannic Majesty offers appropriate facilities in the United Kingdom and in any British colony or protectorate administered by the Government of the United Kingdom for the training of the armed forces of His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan.
- (2) His Britannic Majesty will make available operational units of his armed forces to engage in joint training operations with the armed forces of His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan for a sufficient period in each year.
- (3) His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan agrees to make available facilities in the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan for the purpose of this joint training.

(4) His Britannic Majesty will provide on request any British service personnel whose services are required to ensure the efficiency of the military units of the forces of the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan.

(5) His Britannic Majesty will (a) afford all possible facilities to His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan for the military instruction of Transjordan officers at schools of instruction maintained for His Britannic Majesty's forces, and (b) provide arms, ammunition, equipment and aircraft and other war material for the forces of His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan.

(6) His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan will (a) meet the cost of instruction and equipment referred to in paragraph 5 (a) and (b) above, (b) ensure that the armament and essential equipment of his forces shall not differ in type from those of the forces of His Britannic Majesty, (c) send any personnel of his forces, that may be sent abroad for training, to military schools, colleges and training centres maintained for His Britannic Majesty's forces.

## ARTICLE 7

His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan gives permission for ships of His Britannic Majesty's Navy to visit the ports of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan at any time upon giving notification to the Government of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan.

(Initialled) A. K.  
T. A. H.  
F. EL M.

Enclosure 2 in No. 36

Exchanges of Letters

No. 1

*Tewfiq Abul Huda to Sir A. Kirkbride*  
(Translation) *Amman,*  
Your Excellency, 15th March, 1948.

With reference to Article 4 of the Treaty signed to-day, I desire on behalf of my Government to state that the Covenant of the League of Arab States signed on 22nd

of March, 1945, is included amongst the existing International Agreements to which this Article refers and is an agreement to which in this connexion my Government attaches particular importance.

Please accept, &c.

(Signed) TEWFIQ ABUL HUDA.

No. 2

*Sir A. Kirkbride to Tewfiq Abul Huda*

Your Excellency, 15th March, 1948.

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of to-day's date, which reads as follows:—

[As in No. 1]

Please accept, &c.

(Signed) A. S. KIRKBRIDE.

No. 3

*Sir A. Kirkbride to Tewfiq Abul Huda*

Your Excellency, 15th March, 1948.

On the occasion of the signature of the Treaty of Alliance between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan I have the honour to assure your Excellency that with a view to assisting the Government of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan in their desire to carry out extensive plans in economic and social development His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will do all in their power to meet the requests of the Government of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan for the services of any experts or officials with technical qualifications of whom the Government of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan may stand in need.

Please accept, &c.

(Signed) A. S. KIRKBRIDE.

No. 4

*Tewfiq Abul Huda to Sir A. Kirkbride*

Acknowledgement of No. 3, dated 15th March, 1948.

No. 5

*Sir A. Kirkbride to Tewfiq Abul Huda*

Your Excellency, 15th March, 1948.

I have the honour to inform your Excellency that, as long as the Treaty is in force, His Britannic Majesty will in accordance with arrangements to be agreed upon

annually by the High Contracting Parties afford financial assistance to His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan to enable him to carry out the obligations undertaken in Article 3 of the Treaty of Alliance which was concluded to-day.

Please accept, &c.

(Signed) A. S. KIRKBRIDE.

No. 6

*Tewfiq Abul Huda to Sir A. Kirkbride*

Acknowledgment of No. 5, dated 15th March, 1948.

No. 7

*Sir A. Kirkbride to Tewfiq Abul Huda*

Your Excellency, 15th March, 1948.

In connexion with the Treaty signed by us to-day I have the honour to inform your Excellency that His Majesty's Government regret that they are not yet in a position to be able to negotiate a commercial and establishment agreement with the Government of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan as provided in Article 9 of the treaty of 22nd of March, 1946.

I have, therefore, the honour to propose that the period of two years mentioned in paragraph 2 of article 9 of the Treaty of 1946 shall be regarded as having been extended as from 22nd March, 1948, for a further period of two years and that subject to this amendment the said article 9 shall continue to be operative for this further period.

Please accept, &c.

(Signed) A. S. KIRKBRIDE.

No. 8

*Tewfiq Abul Huda to Sir A. Kirkbride*

(Translation) Amman,  
Your Excellency, 15th March, 1948.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's note of to-day's date informing me that His Majesty's Government are not yet in a position to be able to negotiate a commercial and establishment agreement with the Government of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan as provided in Article 9 of the Treaty of Alliance of 22nd March, 1946, and propose that the period of two years mentioned in paragraph 2 of article 9 of that treaty shall be extended as from 22nd March, 1948, for a further period of two years and that subject to this amend-

ment the said article 9 shall continue to be operative for this further period.

I have the honour to inform you that the Government of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan agrees to this proposal.

Please accept, &c.

(Signed) TEWFIQ ABUL HUDA.

No. 9

*Tewfiq Abul Huda to Sir A. Kirkbride*

(Translation) Amman,  
Your Excellency, 15th March, 1948.

In connexion with article 3 of the annex to the Treaty of Alliance signed this day, I have the honour to inform you that on the final evacuation of the British forces the Government of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan will either themselves take over at a fair valuation, having regard to the use to which they have been put, any buildings, installations or permanent structures which may have been constructed under the terms of articles 1, 2 and 4 of the annex to the Treaty of Alliance signed on 22nd March, 1946, or which may be constructed under the terms of articles 1 (c) and 1 (d) of the annex to the Treaty of Alliance signed this day, or will afford such facilities as may reasonably be necessary to enable the Government of the United Kingdom to dispose thereof to the best advantage.

Please accept, &c.

(Signed) TEWFIQ ABUL HUDA.

No. 10

*Sir A. Kirkbride to Tewfiq Abul Huda*

Your Excellency, 15th March, 1948.

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of to-day's date which reads as follows:—

[As in No. 9]

Please accept, &c.

(Signed) A. S. KIRKBRIDE.

No. 11

*Tewfiq Abul Huda to Sir A. Kirkbride*

(Translation) Amman,  
Your Excellency, 15th March, 1948.

At the moment of the signature of the revised Treaty of Alliance I have the honour to state that although the new treaty contains no provisions similar to those contained in articles 2, 3, 8 and 10 of the Treaty of Alliance signed on 22nd March, 1946, their omission does not imply

any intention to derogate from the principles set forth in these articles.

Please accept, &c.

(Signed) TEWFIQ ABUL HUDA.

No. 12

*Sir A. Kirkbride to Tewfiq Abul Huda*

Your Excellency, 15th March, 1948.

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of to-day's date which reads as follows:—

[As in No. 11]

Please accept, &c.

(Signed) A. S. KIRKBRIDE.

No. 13

*Tewfiq Abul Huda to Sir A. Kirkbride*

(Translation) Amman,

Your Excellency, 15th March, 1948.

With reference to article 1 (b) of the revised annex to the Treaty of Alliance between the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan, I have the honour to inform you that in respect of any land, the lease of which may be required for the provision of the necessary facilities for the accommodation and maintenance of the units of the forces of His Britannic Majesty which may be present in Transjordan in accordance with the provisions of the annex, the necessary action will be taken if it is necessary to expropriate any private rights on such land.

Please accept, &c.

(Signed) TEWFIQ ABUL HUDA.

No. 14

*Sir A. Kirkbride to Tewfiq Abul Huda*

Your Excellency, 15th March, 1948.

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of to-day's date which reads as follows:—

[As in No. 13]

Please accept, &c.

(Signed) A. S. KIRKBRIDE.

No. 15

*Sir A. Kirkbride to Tewfiq Abul Huda*

(Translation) Amman,

Your Excellency, 15th March, 1948.

With reference to the letters exchanged between us this day, relating to financial assistance to be afforded by His Britannic

Majesty to the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that this assistance is to be given on the understanding that it will be used towards the cost of maintaining such military units of the forces of His Hashimite Majesty as are annually agreed to be necessary to carry out the obligations undertaken in article 3 of the Treaty and that His Hashimite Majesty also undertakes to give His Britannic Majesty's representative in Transjordan the necessary facilities for ascertaining that the funds in question are expended for the purpose for which they are issued.

It is understood that the cost of maintenance referred to above includes an appropriate contribution in respect of pensions and gratuities.

Please accept, &c.

(Signed) A. S. KIRKBRIDE.

No. 16

*Tewfiq Abul Huda to Sir A. Kirkbride*  
(Translation) Amman,  
Your Excellency, 15th March, 1948.

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of to-day's date which reads as follows:—

[As in No. 15]

Please accept, &c.

(Signed) TEWFIQ ABUL HUDA.

E 5467/14/G

No. 37

#### CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE TRANSJORDAN MINISTER

##### Evacuation of Palestine and Oil and Aircraft Supplies for Transjordan

*Mr. Bevin to Sir A. Kirkbride (Amman)*

(No. 60) Foreign Office,  
Sir, 27th April, 1948.

The Transjordan Minister came to see me this afternoon.

2. He handed me a message from King Abdullah urging that British troops should remain in occupation and protection of Jerusalem, Nazareth and Bethlehem until 15th May.

3. The message also asked us to make available to Transjordan the following supplies for civilian use only:—

1,000 tons of petrol per month for three months.

No. 17

*Tewfiq Abul Huda to Sir A. Kirkbride*  
(Translation) Amman,  
Your Excellency, 15th March, 1948.

In connexion with paragraph 4 of article 6 of the annex to the Treaty of Alliance signed this day, I have the honour to inform you that His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan will bear the cost of such British personnel including their current pay and allowances and an employers' national insurance contribution and will provide an appropriate contribution in respect of their retired pay and pensions.

Please accept, &c.

(Signed) TEWFIQ ABUL HUDA.

No. 18

*Sir A. Kirkbride to Tewfiq Abul Huda*  
Your Excellency, 15th March, 1948.

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of to-day's date which reads as follows:—

[As in No. 17]

Please accept, &c.

(Signed) A. S. KIRKBRIDE.

He asked that export licences should be granted for two more Rapides and four Proctors, all for civilian purposes. These aircraft would be used by Arab Airways, a civilian company.

E 9054/8285/80

No. 38

#### VISIT OF KING ABDULLAH TO KING FAROUK

*Sir R. Campbell to Mr. Bevin. (Received 6th July)*

(No. 340)

Cairo,  
1st July, 1948.

With reference to my telegram No. 926 of 25th June, regarding King Abdullah's visit to King Farouk, I have the honour to submit the following details of King Abdullah's activities during his forty-eight hours' stay in Cairo.

2. King Abdullah made the journey to Cairo in a specially chartered British Overseas Airways Corporation aircraft (and incidentally thoroughly enjoyed the amenities of the journey) and was met on arrival at Almaza aerodrome by King Farouk in military uniform, the Prime Minister and members of the Cabinet, the Presidents of the Senate and the Chamber, Court officials and other dignitaries. His aircraft was escorted by a squadron of Spitfires of the Royal Egyptian Air Force. King Abdullah, who was accompanied by Fawzi El Molki Pasha, his Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Abdel Kader El-Guindi Pasha, Deputy Chief of the Transjordan General Staff, was warmly embraced by King Farouk and after greeting other personalities present drove with King Farouk to Zaafaran Palace, where he was accommodated as King Farouk's guest. A senior Egyptian Palace official has confirmed that this visit was arranged on the initiative of King Farouk, as has already been reported by His Majesty's Minister in Amman.

3. Shortly after arrival at Zaafaran Palace, King Abdullah received Nokrashy Pasha and various other personalities, including Kerim Tabet Bey, King Farouk's press counsellor and confidant, whom His Majesty retained to lunch.

4. In the evening King Farouk, having conferred on his guest the *Collier* of the Order of Mahomed Ali and received the Transjordan Order of Al Nahda, gave a banquet in honour of his guest at Abdin Palace to which were invited members of

6. I told the Minister that I would look into these questions urgently with my colleagues.

I am, &c.

ERNEST BEVIN.

the Cabinet, the Presidents of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, Court officials and diplomatic representatives of Arab States. Following the banquet, the two monarchs proceeded together to the Mosque of Mohamed Ali to attend the mid-Shabaan prayers at which the Court Imam preached the sermon.

5. On the following morning King Abdullah laid a wreath on the tomb of the late King Fuad in El Rifa'i Mosque and subsequently, in company with King Farouk, visited the military hospital at Helmieh, where Egyptian casualties of the fighting in Palestine are being treated. Among those present on this occasion were Princesses Fawzia and Faiza, attired in uniforms of military nursing sisters, and female volunteer workers of the Mohamed Ali El Kebir charitable organisation. In the evening the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs gave a banquet, to which, apart from leading Egyptian personalities, diplomatic representatives of Arab States were again invited. (Diplomatic representatives of other countries were not invited to any of the functions held in connexion with this royal visit.)

6. King Abdullah returned to Amman on the morning of 24th June in the British Overseas Airways Corporation aircraft which had brought him to Cairo. He was seen off at the aerodrome by King Farouk and similar ceremonial was observed as on the occasion of his arrival. Before leaving His Majesty authorised his Minister for Foreign Affairs to make, on his behalf, the declaration to press representatives reported in my telegram referred to above, an announcement being made simultaneously by King Farouk's press counsellor that this declaration had received the approval of King Farouk and the heads of the other Arab States.

7. Among the notabilities who were received by King Abdullah during his stay

in Cairo were the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem and the Moroccan leader, Abdel Kerim, and his brother. The brief press reports about the ex-Mufti's interview with His Majesty suggested that there had been a friendly exchange of compliments, but, according to the Transjordan Minister in Cairo, King Abdullah talked rather severely, telling the ex-Mufti that the present situation in Palestine had come about largely owing to the latter's irresponsible behaviour and failure to give a constructive lead to the people of Palestine. His Majesty apparently insisted that the ex-Mufti should now step out of the picture and leave the Palestine question in the hands of those who were more competent to handle it in the real interests of the Palestinian people. In talking to Abdel Kerim and his brother King Abdullah, according to press reports which are confirmed by the Transjordan Legation, invited Abdel Kerim to visit Amman and also, it is reported, assured him that the Moroccan question would be dealt with as soon as the Palestine question had been disposed of.

8. In contrast to the ostentatious extravagance and ceremonial which marked the State visit of King Ibn Saud to King Farouk in January 1946, the pattern of King Abdullah's visit was, by oriental standards, brisk, business-like and of relative austerity. To all outward appearances it has been a successful step in the consolidation of Arab unity and friendship at a critical juncture in the history of Arab relations, with the dominant Palestine issue still hanging in the balance. The Transjordan Minister, in conversation with my Oriental Counsellor, said that one purpose which King Abdullah had before him in accepting King Farouk's invitation was to smooth out at the highest level certain difficulties between the two countries which could not easily be settled satisfactorily by the ordinary diplomatic exchanges. The Minister refrained from mentioning specific instances, but they doubtless included the dispute previously reported by His Majesty's Minister in Amman, about the temporary administration of the Hebron district in Palestine and the recent seizure by the Egyptian authorities of a cargo of military equipment consigned to Amman. Another point for discussion may well have been whether King Abdullah's flag should fly alone over Jerusalem, as he would no doubt wish from all the signs we have of the importance he attaches to his occupation of the city, or whether at any rate King Farouk's flag should fly beside

it (see my telegram No. 93, Saving, of 15th June). I suppose, too, that King Farouk was not at all anxious that King Abdullah should visit King Ibn Saud on his own initiative and without ostensibly doing so in agreement with, if not at the suggestion of, King Farouk, having regard to Egypt's care for her prestige as "leader" of the Arab League. Moreover, King Farouk would probably wish to satisfy himself as far as possible that the balance of Saudi Arabia-Egypt with the Hashemites, which is useful to him, was not likely to be unduly modified. The Transjordan Minister, in his conversation with the Oriental Counsellor, remarked that King Abdullah's visit to King Farouk and King Ibn Saud would no doubt, as was intended, convince the world that the Arabs were fundamentally united, particularly on the Palestine issue. But he seemed to regard the visit to Saudi Arabia as of potentially greater significance from Transjordan's point of view since it represented the first personal contact between those two monarchs and might, he hoped, result in the establishment of normal diplomatic relations between Transjordan and Saudi Arabia. The Minister, who admitted that he was not present at the confidential talks between King Abdullah and King Farouk and had not been informed of their details, appeared to discount the likelihood that they would result in any concrete developments such as military alliances between Arab States in the immediate future. He pointed to the existence of military co-operation between those States in Palestine as if to suggest that that was sufficient for the time being. Some Egyptian press commentators have inferred that the two monarchs discussed certain practical aspects of such further co-operation on the expiry of the cease-fire agreement.

9. Finally, I would mention as a matter of potential significance in regard to the future of Palestine the exchange of telegrams during this visit between the Greek Orthodox Patriarch in Alexandria and King Abdullah. According to the versions published in the press, the Patriarch welcomed His Majesty and thanked him for his "benevolent protection" of the Greek Orthodox churches and convents in Palestine. In his reply, King Abdullah is stated to have assured the Patriarch that the protection granted to churches and convents and to the faithful was a matter of duty arising from hereditary traditions. This exchange of messages is interesting in the light of information given to me on

26th June by M. Azcarate, who describes himself as Count Bernadotte's representative for Egypt and the Arab League, that the Christians in Jerusalem were 100 per cent. in favour of King Abdullah. King Abdullah, he said, had played up very well to the idea of being the protector of the interests of all faiths in Palestine and had been careful to reassure the Jews and cunning at doing so. At the same time M. Azcarate remarked that, as is well known, the Christians in Jerusalem were

largely Arab and doubtless considered the matter from the national point of view.

I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Amman, Bagdad, Beirut, Damascus, Jeddah and Jerusalem, and to British Middle East Office, Commander-in-Chief, Middle East Land Force, and to General Officer Commanding, Headquarters, British Troops in Egypt.

I have, &c.

RONALD CAMPBELL.

E 9536/49/25

No. 39

### VISIT OF KING ABDULLAH TO RIYADH

*Mr. Trott to Mr. Bevin. (Received 15th July)*

(No. 130)

Sir,

Jedda,

11th July, 1948.

The recent visit of His Majesty King Abdullah of Transjordan to Riyadh from 27th to 30th June was an event which caused a great impression in this country. I have the honour to submit a short report on the visit from the materials hitherto available to me, which are not as full as I should have hoped: the local press gives thousands of words with very little factual information, and I have not yet been able to see anyone who was actually present. Should I obtain any further information of importance I will report it in due course.

2. King Abdullah travelled to Riyadh by air after his visit to Cairo, and came down at Bagdad on his way. He landed at Dhahran on the morning of Saturday, 26th June, and was met by the heir apparent, the Amir Saud, and a suitable retinue. I have not yet heard the names of the Transjordan officials who doubtless accompanied His Majesty: I understand they included one general and some subordinates staff. Fuad Hamza also came with the visiting King. An entertainment was arranged for the visitors by the Amir of Hasa, Amir Saud ibn Jiluwi. It was hoped that they would fly on to Riyadh with little delay, but stormy weather postponed the departure of the Royal aeroplanes. They eventually landed at Riyadh on the afternoon of Sunday, 27th June, and were met on the aerodrome by King Ibn Saud in person, together with a host of sons, relations, courtiers and tribesmen on horseback.

3. There followed a long programme of entertainment and visits. A huge banquet was given at the Royal Palace at Riyadh:

the visitors were taken to see the agricultural scheme at Kharj, where they were reported to have been surprised and delighted at the wonderful progress which the scheme had made; a huge entertainment was given by the Amir Saud in his garden "Nasiriyeh": and very expensive presents were exchanged. The Saudi press merely says that twelve presents, including horses and four cars, were given by the Saudi monarch: and at Jeddah we heard of a wonderful sword adorned with fabulously valuable diamonds, and of a caravan of twelve lorries, which was despatched from the capital to Amman laden with gifts of various kinds. Some gold coins were certainly included. An informant from Riyadh, whose reports have been accurate in the past, relates the following story: King Abdullah having expressed the opinion that it was a pity that Saudi Arabia was such a vast desert, King Ibn Saud presented him on his departure with 100,000 sovereigns, as a proof that the country did after all contain something besides sand.

4. I enclose herein a translation of the communiqué which the two Kings published about their conversations. It is phrased in what I am informed is the purest of classical Arabic, having been drafted by the visiting monarch, who is an authority on such matters. At least one of the expressions was so classical that hardly anyone understood it at all, but by a process of guessing it was easy to see what was meant. At the same time as this communiqué was released, another was issued about an interview between Fuad Hamza and the Saudi press: I enclose a translation of that

communiqué : it is the first statement which I remember seeing from the Saudi Government about their press.

5. From reports by colleagues I gather that the Royal visitor expressed anxiety about the 3,000 "irregulars" who were waiting at Riyadh for an opportunity to prove their mettle in Palestine. These persons are no doubt tribesmen who have been concentrating in Riyadh for some time. It remains to be seen whether they will now cross Transjordan to join in the fighting in Palestine. I may also mention here the report that King Abdullah not only offered to have Rashid Ali as his guest in Transjordan, but also convinced the Saudi King that the two Rashidi sheikhs about whom Ibn Saud has expressed great anxiety were not intriguing against him in any way.

6. The visit came to an end on Wednesday morning, 30th June, when the visitors' aeroplanes left Riyadh and flew to Bagdad. There has been talk of a return visit, but I hear that, owing to the Saudi King's trouble with his rheumatic knee, it is probable that the heir apparent will go instead of his father.

7. It remains to offer a few remarks concerning the visit as a whole. I feel sure that the general opinion in Jeddah, and no doubt in the whole country, is that the visit has been a great success and will have an excellent effect on the future of this kingdom. One of the local merchants, who has been such a critic of the Saudi régime that he could hardly mention Saudi officials without accusing them of oppression, said to me that he was sure that the visit had done a great deal of good : it would end any separatist tendencies between the Hejaz and Nejd, and would allow the country to develop on a proper basis of unity. The only discordant note which I have heard is a report of complaints from some Jeddawis about the extravagance of the presents which were given to the Royal visitor.

8. The question why Ibn Saud suddenly decided to forget all his previous tirades against the Hashimite family and invite their senior representative to visit him is one which I find it difficult to answer. I have to admit that I did not expect it, and that I was very surprised when it took place. But I feel slightly less ashamed of my lack of political wisdom when I reflect that the King's Minister for Foreign Affairs and his Ambassador to London were just as wrong as I was. It must have been about the very moment when prepara-

tions were starting for the Royal visit that the Amir Faisal and Sheikh Hafez Wahba said, in very direct language in a meeting at the Foreign Office, that they did not think a reconciliation was possible. King Ibn Saud evidently made up his mind very suddenly and acted at once. As for his omitting to inform the Amir Faisal, that does not cause me much surprise : the King's mind does not work in that way.

9. As far as my information goes, the suggestion of a meeting on this occasion first reached the King from Fuad Hamza, who has lately been enjoying a period of leave of absence at Beirut. He seems to have been in close contact with the Transjordan King and to have used arguments which induced Ibn Saud to overcome his traditional repugnance to the Hashimite family. He may have been influenced by some or all of the following considerations :—

- (i) He knows, from several explicit statements from British sources, that His Majesty's Government are very anxious that such a reconciliation should take place. I am sure that he takes a great deal of notice of everything we say, and now that he feels that his relations with the Americans are going to be difficult he may be thinking that it will be prudent to improve his relations with us in any possible way.
- (ii) We know that a certain number of tribesmen have been clamouring to be sent to Palestine for some time, but hitherto the undeclared attitude of the Transjordan Government has prevented their departure.
- (iii) It may be that the King is feeling old, that fears that Abdullah may survive him and take a firmer line about the Hejaz with the new Saudi King than he thought it politic to take with Ibn Saud. A reconciliation now would insure against that unpleasant contingency.
- (iv) Hitherto Ibn Saud has been very sensitive about the inadequacy of his own army, especially when compared with that of Transjordan. But now that some of his army is in Palestine the King may feel that he is on more equal terms than previously; and he seems to have staged a parade of tribal riflemen which was designed to impress the visitor and may have succeeded in so doing.

(v) He may even have felt that if he staged a reconciliation he would be more likely to receive arms, ammunition and instructors from us for his army, and eventually for his air force.

(vi) Most probably it was the Palestine struggle which marked the turning point; Ibn Saud may have considered that King Abdullah was more likely to expand towards Palestine and Syria than towards the South, and I do not think that Ibn Saud would really care much if he did as long as he left the Hejaz alone.

10. The actual details of the programme of reception seem to have been well worked out, probably with the help of Fuad Hamza. Sheikh Yusuf Yasin was kept out of the way at Jeddah, where he occasionally murmured how wonderful the King was; and all thorny questions, such as Aqaba and Ma'an, seem to have been left completely alone. Sheikh Yusuf Yasin has informed the United States Minister that representatives from each country will be exchanged, but nothing of that kind has yet been seen in writing, and I wonder whether the sheikh was speaking with authority or not.

11. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Amman, Bagdad, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus, to the head of the British Middle East Office, and to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

I have, &c.  
A. C. TROTT.

Enclosure 1 in No. 11  
(Translation)

*Extract from Umm-al-Qura, No. 1217,  
dated 2nd July, 1948*

AGREEMENT BETWEEN TWO GREAT KINGS

*Joint Declaration*

Thanks be to God . . . and peace upon His Prophet, Mohamed.

The first object of our meeting is our sincere desire to strengthen the links of brotherhood and to establish friendship between us and between our two peoples as long as the peoples and the House of God exist—by the will of God—and to take into consideration the present circumstances which call for unity and agreement,

bearing in mind two fundamental principles. The first is the fear of God, and the second is to fight to the end in guarding our heritage and to defend our existence. We have found every benefit and blessing in this our meeting and have become sure of the existence of complete agreement in our views both in private and in public affairs, and also complete unity in patriotic and national aims and objects, and therefore declare that—

We, Abdul Aziz bin Abdurrahman Al Faisal Al-Saud and Abdullah bin Al-Hussein bin Ali are in agreement in our ideas, views and aims in connexion with this matter. In particular, we are in agreement in supporting the Arab League in whatever it may approve or disapprove in accordance with the charter of the League of Arab States within the limits of its responsibility, especially in what concerns Palestine, in which matter we are doing all in our power to ensure the complete independence of the Arabs and their absolute authority over Palestine and its deliverance. We declare our full confidence in the Arab League and in its Political Committee, and we believe that the league will carefully examine the present situation and advise as to what it understands to be the interests of the Arabs and conducive to their preservation. We feel a great confidence that God will grant us good results, especially as we are practically certain that the Arab League has no aim other than the establishment of peace in the Middle East, a peace which will not be achieved save by the preservation of the rights of the Arabs and the maintenance of the independence of their countries; and that if the league is forced to take defensive action, that will be purely for the sake of the fundamental interests of the Arabs, for honour, for the country, and for peace.

Enclosure 2 in No. 11

(Translation)

*Extract from Al Bilad As-Saudia, No. 731,  
dated 30th June, 1948*

An important declaration about Palestine by His Majesty the King to journalists.

His Excellency Fuad Bey Hamza, adviser to His Majesty King Abdul Aziz, held a press conference at which he delivered the

following statement in the name of His Majesty the King :—

I am exceedingly pleased and delighted at the visit of my brother, His Majesty King Abdullah, and I consider this day on which he has honoured the town of Riyadh to be a happy and memorable day and also a blessed epoch in the modern history of the Arabs. To-day, the Arabs have shown the world the best possible example of agreement and co-operation. They have proved to the whole world that their hands are united and that they are brothers, supporting each other like the parts of a strong building.

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No. 40

#### VISIT OF KING ABDULLAH TO KING IBN SAUD

*Sir A. Kirkbride to Mr. Bevin. (Received 16th July)*

(No. 38) *Amman,*  
Sir, *6th July, 1948.*

I have the honour to report a series of comments made to me by King Abdullah on the subject of his recent official visit to King Abdel Aziz Ibn Saud.

2. On the subject of Palestine, King Abdel Aziz took a realistic view of the position and was critical of the manner in which the matter had been handled by the Arab League. He felt bound, however, to support the league and had prepared some 3,000 tribal levies, who would be sent to Syria to co-operate in any future military operations.

According to King Abdullah these men had no reserves of ammunition or equipment and were more likely to be a liability than an asset to the Arab military machine.

King Abdullah felt that King Abdel Aziz had no intention of allowing developments in Palestine, whatever they might be, to compromise his relations with the American authorities or with His Majesty's Government.

As regards the Arab League, King Abdel Aziz had remarked that he had only joined the institution on British advice, to which King Abdullah rejoined that he only remained a member because of British advice.

3. No direct mention was made of outstanding questions between Transjordan and Saudi Arabia, but, according to King

My attitude towards Palestine is clear and evident. It is an attitude shared by my brothers Their Majesties, their Excellencies and their Highnesses, Kings, Amirs, and heads of the Arabs and the political leaders among the Arab population of Palestine, to prevent at whatever price the establishment of a Jewish State or of partition.

As regards the press, I salute the journalists as well as those who control it, and I praise them to the extent they deserve and wish them prosperity in their difficult duty. The object of which is to comment on events and to make them clear to public opinion in the country and outside it.

of the probable opposition of the Iraqi Government. He also doubted whether a visit of the Regent of Iraq to Riyadh would do any good because he and King Ibn Saud belonged to different generations and had little in common as regards outlook.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassadors at Bagdad and Jeddah and to the British Middle East Office.

I have, &c.  
A. S. KIRKBRIDE.

Abdullah, King Abdel Aziz said twice that everything which had been at issue between them was dead and forgotten. King Abdullah assumes, therefore, that nothing more will be heard of the Saudi claims to Ma'an and Aqaba and to a corridor to Syria.

King Abdullah did not say whether he regarded this burial of the hatchet as covering the Hashimite claims on the subject of the Hejaz.

King Abdel Aziz decided that, pending some more permanent arrangement, Sheikh Fuad Hamza would act as an intermediary between the Transjordan and Saudi authorities.

4. King Abdel Aziz asked King Abdullah to act as a mediator in his troubles with the Iraqi authorities. The most urgent complaint was in connexion with the administration of the Saudi-Iraqi frontier, where the Saudi frontier authorities could obtain no satisfaction from their Iraqi colleagues and were frequently treated with disrespect.

King Abdel Aziz wanted to get rid of Rashid Gailani at almost any price and asked King Abdullah to take him to Transjordan. As regards the Shammar refugees in Iraq, all that was wanted was a promise that they would not be permitted to intrigue against the Saudi authorities.

King Abdullah felt doubtful about giving Rashid Gailani asylum here because